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Inter-Arab Affairs

Libya Said Willing To Sponsor Syria-Iraq Parley

JN2912105789 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] Well-informed Arab sources in Damascus have said that Libya is currently making efforts to clear the air between Damascus and Baghdad and to arrange a summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. The sources also said Egypt supports these efforts to achieve a Syrian-Iraqi reconciliation.

The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD cites these sources as saying that the message conveyed a few days ago by the commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces from Libyan President [title as heard] Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn dealt with arrangements of the mediation between the two parties.

In his message, the Libyan president expressed his readiness to host a summit in Tripoli between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Saddam Husayn, in addition to discussing bilateral relations and military cooperation.

The sources added that in the past few days contacts were held between Egypt and Libya, during which Tripoli informed Cairo that it will exert efforts to render success to Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement. Egypt also asserted that it will make complementary efforts to the Libyan efforts in this regard.

Arab League Responds to Events in Romania

LD2812203489 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 28 Dec 89

["Text" of press statement by the Arab League Secretariat General on allegations of Arab participation in the events in Romania; date and place of issue not given]

[Text] The Secretariat General has made many contacts with the Romanian Embassy in Tunis. During these contacts, it expressed its amazement at the circulation of some allegations by hostile Zionist sources outside Romania regarding the participation by some individuals, holding the citizenships of some Arab countries, in the recent events in Romania. It also expressed its concern over the assaults to which some Arab citizens have been subjected as a result of these provocative statements and allegations.

The Secretariat General stressed that the Arab League and its countries build their relations with all countries, including Romania, on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty, noninterference in internal affairs, and complete respect for the will of all peoples in the choice they make. The Secretariat General pointed out that it aims to continue to bolster its relations with East European countries on the basis of the principles and orientations of cooperation endorsed by Arab countries at their meetings.

The Arab League pointed out that it expected from officials in Romania to take the initiative of refuting the hostile allegations and to ensure that no Arab citizen is exposed to any kind of harm.

Mubarak Said Brokering 'Arafat-Al-Asad Meeting

JN2512080289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0735 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Dubayy, 25 Dec (WAKH)—Press reports said here today that Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak is endeavoring to arrange a meeting between Syrian and Palestinian Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Yasir 'Arafat. AL-BAYAN cited Palestinian sources as saying that this meeting will precede a tripartite summit meeting among Presidents Mubarak, Al-Asad, and 'Arafat.

The Palestinian sources added that Egypt is seeking a unified Arab stance on the peace talks from this summit before Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, leaves for Washington to meet with the U.S. and Israeli foreign ministers next month.

Palestinian Affairs

U.S. Called 'Major Stumbling Block to Peace'

JN2812203289 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 26 Dec 89 p 7

[Report by Fatimah Mansur]

[Excerpts] Abu-'Ali Mustafa, assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has declared that the PLO will not tolerate trusteeship over the Palestinian people or allow a substitute leadership to supplant it. [passage omitted]

The statement was made during a meeting held at the general federation of Kuwaiti workers on Hawalli Square last night under the slogan: "The Intifadah and its Political Repercussions." [passage omitted]

Abu-'Ali Mustafa, who is also a PLO Executive Committee member, said it is high time a united Arab stand was adopted on the Palestinian question and that the United States rather than Israel was declared the principal stumbling block to peace. Notwithstanding global changes reflecting a universal desire to pursue peace, the United States as a major power still behaves as an unchallenged gendarme policing security. A case in point, added Abu-'Ali Mustafa, was U.S. interference in Panama, brushing aside international law and arrogating the right to military intervention in an independent nation.

It will not be enough to say that the onus is on the United States, the USSR, and Israel. The United States will have to be made to feel that its interests in the region are at risk. [passage omitted]

Abu-'Ali Mustafa said: We have to have the guts to unambiguously say that the major stumbling block to peace in the region is the United States. [passage omitted]

He wondered why it is that an international consensus can be mustered to decide on and apply sanctions against South Africa, and not one punititive measure is taken against Israel which practices racial violence against the Palestinian people, especially given that ours is a long drawn-out battle that needs the mobilization of all the resources at our disposal. He said the Palestinian people must fight this battle with relentless determination. He stressed the need for Palestinian institutions outside the occupied land to identify with the intifadah on a daily basis.

Abu-'Ali Mustafa stated that Iraq's space missile launch is a heart-warming achievement, hailing it as an Arab success against Israel and a moral boost for the Arab nation signalling that Israel is not the undisputed master of technology in the region.

U.S. 'Regression' in Talks With PLO Analyzed

JN2812094289 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28-29 Dec 89 pp 1,3

[By Lamis K. Andoni]

[Text] When Former President Ronald Reagan finally gave the signal to end the American boycott of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in December 1988, the step was heralded as a historic breakthrough in the Middle East peace process. A year later, however, prospects for a peaceful settlement remain elusive, while the dialogue itself seems to have lost its purpose.

"There is actually no dialogue left," said a senior PLO official. "And even when there were official talks they have achieved very little," he added.

Despite four rounds of official U.S.-PLO talks in Tunis and numerous contacts, differences persist on both substantiative and procedural issues, while there are hardly any common denominators to be found between the PLO and the Israeli government.

But if it might have been unrealistic to expect the Bush administration to untie the knots of the Arab-Israeli conflict in less than one year—its period in office—Palestinians had anticipted that the dialogue would lead at least to the establishment of direct, official and high-level channels of communications with Washington.

Instead there has been a continuous "regression in the function of the dialogue" as third parties have become the "official channels" replacing direct contacts.

The most striking manifestation of the diminishing importance of the dialogue as a direct and official channel came when the U.S. stipulated that the PLO should convey its reply to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's proposals be conveyed through the Egyptian government. Thus, when the PLO tried "to make a point" by delivering its reply to the American ambassador in Tunis, a U.S. spokesman declared that it was "an unofficial" response.

The "regression" in the American position, however, did not confine to the modalities of the relations, but seems to reflect an approach to the conflict by the administration.

According to PLO officials, the dialogue ceased to function as a major channel of negotiations last August immediately following the fourth round of talks held in Tunis. Later, the PLO was "notified," through a third West European channel, that the American administration preferred not to operate through "a local broker," and in that case it was Cairo.

The justification given, according to PLO officials, was that the new administration wanted to avoid burning its fingers if the peace process collapsed. Since then, Egypt has become the major if not the only official channel for the U.S.-PLO dialogue.

Palestinian officials believe that Washington deliberately sought to subsitute Cairo as the direct U.S.-PLO channel for two reasons: First, to evade demands by the PLO for American guarantees regarding Israel's adherence to implementation of any agreed upon settlement and a central role for the PLO; second, Washington hoped that Cairo would have more leverage on the PLO and thus can succeed in extracting more Palestinian concessions.

Other PLO officials, however, argue that the Egyptian role was reinforced by the attitude of Palestine President Yasir 'Arafat, who was apparently hoping that Cairo's weight and influence would enhance the organisation's negotiating position.

But even before Cairo's mediation practically replaced the established direct PLO-U.S. line, the dialogue did not seem to be progressing towards cementing a direct line.

To begin with, and contrary to the PLO's expectations, the U.S. did not upgrade its level of contacts which remained confined to U.S. Ambassador in Tunis Robert Pelletreau, who, according to PLO officials, had limited negotiating power" has been diminishing. [sentence as published] "His role appeared to have been reduced to conveying messages," a PLO official commented.

The apparent shift in the American attitude, however, was not a total surprise to the PLO, as the focus of the actual talks had always revolved around pressures on the organisation to give a green light to the Palestinians in the occupied territories to negotiate with Israel.

In other words, the Americans, according to PLO officials, had never got down to discussing a central or a direct role for the PLO itself.

Moreover, the Americans did not show interest in discussing the Palestinian peace strategy. Thus, when Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir launched his election proposals, it almost automatically became the focus of the dialogue.

Yet, until last April many PLO officials, including 'Arafat, had entertained hopes in the ability of the dialogue to evolve into a higher stage of relations with Washington.

Palestinian hopes in the advancement of the dialogue caused heated internal differences, even wthin Fatah itself, during a meeting of the PLO Central Council in Tunis in the end of March. 'Arafat was then, albeit with difficulty, able to convince "hardliners" to give the dialogue a chance.

But by August, as the American administration publicly endorsed the main principles of the Shamir proposal, 'Arafat's patience was starting to wane.

Supporters of the dialogue came under fire during the fifth congress of the Fatah, held in Tunis in August and the Fatah communique stressed armed struggle as a viable and strategic alternative.

'Arafat himself was by then convinced that the U.S. was "deliberately procrastinating in a bid to give Israel time to crush the intifada." At the congress he came under pressure to pledge that the Fatah movement would be prepared for other options if the peace process reached a dead end.

The fourth and last round of the Palestinian-American dialogue was held in Tunis immediately after the Fatah congress and the U.S. protested against the Fatah communique.

According to analysts, the tone of the Fatah congress surprised the American administration which thought that the movement had lost much of its militant spirit.

The August meeting was the last round of official American talks with the PLO, and since then the meetings confined to Pelletreau and the PLO Ambassador in Tunis Hakam Bala'wi who meet frequently to exchange messages.

But the last straw, from the Palestinian view, was Baker's plan which appeared to aim at marginalising the PLO's role.

In the Palestinian opinion, Baker's plan was consistent with the official American attitude towards the dialogue and it had actually provided a mechanism on how to proceed with the Israeli-proposed elections.

Baker's plan which was not immediately conveyed to the PLO, marked a turning point when the PLO felt that its exclusion has become the centre of official American policy.

To bloc any exclusion of the PLO, the Central Council met in Baghdad last October and stipulated that it should name the Palestinian delegation to the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, which should be part of efforts leading to the convening of an international peace conference. It also demanded an international sponsorship for the suggested dialogue.

In essence, the PLO approved the dialogue but insisted on its full involvement. But, by then, the process was taking a relatively new course, as Cairo was emerging as the principal interlocutor—at least as far as the U.S. and Israel were concerned.

'Arafat went to Cairo in November and the Egyptian government tried to persuade him to take a more conciliatory stand to accept that he would stay out of a direct and public role in naming the delegation.

In an attempt to show more flexibility and to get American guarantees, 'Arafat asked for "clarifications" on the PLO's role in the process and on the process of the formation of the Palestinian delegation. In the list of queries, the PLO asked if "it was clear to the U.S. that the PLO would appoint the delegation in the organisation's capacity as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

The American reply was that Washington recognised that the party which would name the delegation would be the most influential Palestinian force. The American response implied that Washington was aware that the PLO will name the delegation, but that it does not recognise it as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Later on, the PLO was also notified that its role should remain invisible and indirect.

By then Cairo did not only replace the direct U.S.-PLO channel but the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue was practically evolving into "a bone-breaking" confrontation which took different forms.

The American objective, as the PLO saw it, was to force the PLO to accept a merginal role and to accept that Cairo played the major and public role in conveying and announcing Palestinian decisions.

The PLO countered by calling on an emergency Arab meeting at the foreign ministerial level to support the PLO stance. The organisation's frustrations grew while its suspicions about American objectives were confirmed when Arab diplomats reported an American letter to the Arab ministers urging them not to endorse a position that "would block Egyptian efforts."

The meeting itself, which took place in Tunis in late November, was attended by four Arab foreign ministers—representing Jordan, Iraq, Tunis and Algiers—while the other countries sent lower level officials. For the PLO, the confrontation with the U.S. entered "a critical stage" as Palestinian officials privately blamed U.S. pressures for the failure of most Arab foreign ministers to show up. The message, from the PLO point of view, was clear: "Washington was seeking to undermine the PLO's standing and was still seeking a substitute for the PLO."

"After one year of dialogue, the Americans are still looking for the representative of the Palestinian people. With whom have they been talking for the last year? With ghosts?" asked a frustrated 'Arafat. "If it suits them they can keep looking," he told this writer shortly before the PLO delivered its reply to Baker's plan.

What frustrated the PLO the most was not that they no longer had a direct channel to Washington, but that the organisation was "not allowed" to play a public role. "It

was not bad enough that we could not directly convey our reply to Washington but the worst was that we were not allowed to even claim that we had a reply," a PLO official said in reference to Washington's repeated announcements that it was waiting for an Egyptian response.

Thus, from the Palestinian viewpoint, instead of the dialogue being a starting point for relations between the U.S. and the PLO, Washington is aiming to have a third party (i.e. Egypt) to represent the PLO one year after starting the dialogue.

"They (the Americans) can impose channels and avoid a direct dialogue, but if they think that any party can bring a Palestinian delegation to the negotiating table without PLO approval, all they will be doing is just trying," a Palestinian official said.

GCC Urged To Influence U.S. on Palestine

PM2712170789 Jeddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic 19 Dec 89 p 4

[By Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi]

[Excerpt] Tunis, AL-MADINAH bureau—Arab circles and the Palestinian leadership are following with great interest the 10th Gulf summit, being held today in Muscat, in view of the political and economic weight which the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states enjoy at the Arab, Islamic, and international levels.

In that context 'Abdallah Hurani, PLO Executive Committee member and director of the PLO Culture Department, expressed in a statement to AL-MADINAH his belief that the GCC states can positively influence the U.S. position of bias toward Israel by virtue of the political and economic weight which these states enjoy at the international level and their cordial relations with the United States. 'Abdallah Hurani pointed out that the PLO is looking to the 10th Gulf summit and every Arab grouping to discuss the Palestinian issue and its developments, especially as the intifadah is entering its 3d year, to emphasize the material and moral support for the intifadah and to utilize the political results produced by the intifadah.

He added that the intifadah has done a great deal at the level of world, European, and U.S. public opinion, but has not secured any measures to expedite Palestinian independence.

'Abdallah Hurani held the U.S. Administration responsible for the faltering of the peace process because of its bias toward Israel. He emphasized that the U.S. Administration is not looking for a solution to the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people's rights so much as merely thinking about finding a solution to extricate Israel from its crisis and isolation. [passage omitted]

U.S Said To Back Plan To Deport Palestinians

NC2812083589 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 25 Dec 89 p 5

[Text] According to a Western diplomatic report which arrived in Beirut a few days ago, the U.S Administration has agreed to deport 500,000 Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Though shedding no light on how this will be done, the report confirms the U.S decision. A politician estimates that 500,000 Palestinians will be deported in accordance with a 2-year plan.

PLO's Najjab Reviews Relations With Damascus

NC2812141189 Paris AFP in English 1308 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Cairo, Dec 28 (AFP)—The renewal of diplomatic ties between Egypt and Syria, after a 12-year break, has come in response to a Soviet shift in Middle East policy and the dramatic developments in Eastern Europe. [passage omitted]

In Tunis, a senior PLO official said the renewal of Egyptian-Syrian ties was likely to produce greater cooperation between Arab countries that support the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

The move should help "eliminate obstacles to a united Arab action" aimed at ensuring an Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the Palestinian right to establish an independent state, Sulayman Najjab said.

The executive committee member, interviewed by AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, said the organisation was "anxious to improve its relations with Damascus," which went sour in 1983 when Mr. 'Arafat was declared persona non grata in Syria.

He hoped an executive committee delegation would visit Syria shortly, as planned for several months, Mr. Najjab said.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the PLO's political department chief Faruq Qaddumi discussed the proposed visit last week on the sidelines of the Arab-European conference in Paris, he said, without giving the results.

Habash Discusses Intifadah, Ties With Syria

JN2012073089 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 17 Dec 89 p 20

[Interview with Dr George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP, by Dr Ahmad Abu-Matar in Damascus; date not given]

[Text] [Abu-Matar] How do you assess the future prospects of the intifadah after it has entered its 3d year?

[Habash] We must first stress that after 2 years have passed since the eruption of the intifadah, it has no choice but to continue to achieve its objectives of freedom, independence, and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state. Regarding prospects of the future stage, I believe that this depends on the course the PLO will follow in dealing with the changes that have been introduced by the intifadah. If we were able to force Israel and the United States to change their intransigence, then we can be optimistic over the future of the intifadah, and we can say that this course is the one that will bring us closer to victory. However, if the PLO continues to consider political and diplomatic action as the central link in the chain of its activities, then this would prolong the suffering of our masses. I do not say here that this will foil the intifadah, no, because the intifadah is our Palestinian people's will inside and outside the occupied territories. Therefore, I hope that the past year's experience will be sufficient for the PLO's leadership to forge basic changes in the means of its work so that boosting, entrenching, and securing the continuity of the intifadah would become the central link in its activities. In order not to be misunderstood, I stress that the PFLP does not belittle the importance and value of diplomatic action. However, it does not agree with the concept that diplomatic action is the central link.

[Abu-Matar] Recently, information has emerged about differences among the Palestinian factions under the PLO Executive Committee regarding the usefulness of resuming military operations. What is the PFLP's views on this?

[Habash] We agree that the intifadah has introduced great, radical, and qualitative changes. We must take these changes into consideration. During its session that was held directly following the eruption of the intifadah, the PFLP Central Committee said that the intifadah constitutes a new stage in the Palestinian national struggle. We have also analyzed the characteristics of this stage. We have no doubt that the intifadah has constituted a new stage in the Palestinian national struggle due to the fact that all classes of the Palestinian people are involved in waging the struggle to achieve their objectives. By this, I mean the massive, democratic, and popular nature of the intifadah. Taking this meaning into consideration, this stage is more advanced than the stage of armed struggle, which used to mean the stage of the Palestinian vanguards, the stage of the fedayeen. The Palestinian masses used to support and applaud the vanguard stage. The vanguard stage will continue to be the stage of vanguard struggle. However, the intifadah is the stage when all the masses are participating in the struggle. At any rate, I do not agree with those who say that the intifadah is an alternative to armed struggle. I believe that a sound scientific view would show that the intifadah complements armed struggle. In light of these two viewpoints, the differences referred to in the question become clear. We in the PFLP support the continuation of the massive, democratic, and popular nature of the intifadah. We believe that it is wrong to turn the intifadah into an armed movement because this would give Israel the pretext to brutally oppress the camps and the masses of our Palestinian people.

However, while saying no to transforming the intifadah into an armed intifadah, we say yes to backing the intifadah with firepower. Here I would like the difference between the two to be very clear. In order for the intifadah to realize its political objectives and to effect a change in the Israeli position, the Israeli army should sustain human losses through the Arab borders. What are the 10,000 rifles doing in Lebanon? Why do we not seriously consider fighting from all the Arab borders without exception? Why do we not inflict human losses on the Israeli army by launching raids and setting ambushes outside the intifadah area? Therefore, we are pained when we find that there are forces hampering the intifadah stage. The intifadah stage requires that we should combine the intifadah with armed struggle. This has not taken place so far.

In my opinion, the leadership that wants to win the battle must define and use all of its cards without exception. The 10,000 armed men in Lebanon are a card that should be used. Our masses in the Palestinian areas that were occupied in 1948 are also a card that should be used. Our masses abroad and their ability to affect developments should also be used. The problem is that all the Palestinian leadership meetings are devoted to discussing what the Swedish minister or Waldegrave or others conveyed to it. This means that the central link in its movement is diplomatic action. In our opinion, this will not lead to the independent state. We endorse the argument that political existence means geographical existence as well but in our view the geographical existence is more important. We do not believe that the gap between the political existence on the world map and geographical existence on the ground can easily be bridged. I would prefer existence on the ground first because this will guarantee existence on the political map.

We would like to state that the PFLP has no political program of its own. Our strategic program is the one adopted by all groups—namely, complete liberation of Palestinian soil. As for our short-term program—here I refer to the word program in the scientific sense—we have no strategic or short-term program. We have a defined concept and tactics and certain tasks to reach the aims of our programs, be they short-term or strategic. The issue here is not one of differences over programs but of tactics and defining tasks. These are simple differences, I think.

[Abu-Matar] How do you view the future of the Palestinian national unity within the PLO now in light of the PFLP's objections to the PLO leadership's political line?

[Habash] We are convinced that we cannot realize the Palestinian state without Palestinian national unity. All attempts to abort the intifadah so far have foundered on the rock of this unity. I hope that what I said just now will not be construed as a possible PFLP desire to leave the PLO framework. However, what I just said refers to

and clearly defines our tasks and struggle to rectify the erroneous political line which the PLO is following. We should not despair of the democratic struggle within the PLO framework. For instance, I would like to point out that the PLO bylaws stipulate that the Palestine National Council [PNC] should meet evey year, and in view of the fact that the 19th PNC session was held on 15 November 1988, the 20th session should be held as soon as possible.

In this session, we will discuss and reassess the policy that has been pursued by the PLO. Such a discussion must be marked by warmth, vitality, fraternal sentiments, and affection. We must judge this policy using our own minds, displaying total honesty and overlooking all factional considerations. We should ask ourselves the following questions: Has the policy of concessions which we have been pursuing helped bring about a change in the Israeli stand? Or has the Israeli stand grown more intransigent? Has this policy helped bring about a change in the U.S. stand? Or has this stand turned into one based on a formula stipulating that whenever U.S. settlement efforts are deadlocked, the solution is attainable through bringing further pressure to bear on the PLO leadership? I am sure that Baker works according to the formula stipulating that any standoff in the peace efforts are to be tackled and remedied by putting pressure on the PLO, and not on Shamir. We must reassess this issue as brothers and officials. This reassessment must be made with a high sense of responsibility. Then, it would make no difference whether the views of the PFLP or another faction prove to be correct and sound. We must reassess this issue while bearing in mind our masses' interests. This is actually what I said in the last PNC session. I then said that we would discuss this issue after 1 year, and that if we find that this policy has brought about a change in the Israeli and U.S. stands and brought us closer to the materialization of the state, we would then admit that we were mistaken. I added: We also hope that there will be no stubbornness or an inability to read facts and realities if a review of developments confirms the opposite.

[Abu-Matar] The issue of executing collaborators has become a bone of contention in the Palestinian arena, since signs and indications have emerged confirming that some of those executed were not actually collaborators. What is the PFLP's stance on this issue? Do you have specific controls governing these executions?

[Habash] First, we must agree on two basic rules: The first one concerns the seriousness of the fifth column and the grave threats posed by the existence of this column. This seriousness made some people believe that the task of confronting these traitors is a basic one that should assume precedence over that of inflicting losses on the Zionist enemy. The second one stipulates that if this task is not accomplished in accordance with specific norms and rules, the application of the first rule could result in mistakes that might eventually negatively affect the march of the intifadah. These two rules are the ones that must govern our positions and behavior regarding this issue. Moreover, I would like to warn against blowing things out of proportion in regard to the executions that have been carried out so far. I would also like to affirm that the PFLP is keenly interested in this issue, and that its leadership has demonstrated an eagerness to investigate each incident that raised questions, arguments, and counterarguments. I can safely say that the PFLP's assessment of this issue indicates that only few mistakes have been made in this regard. Hence, we would make a mistake if we were to inflate this topic and fail to cut it down to size. I would like here to list in brief the rules that we deem necessary in confronting collaborators and which would prevent us from making mistakes or pitfalls. These rules are the following:

1. There is a need to continue to give collaborators the chance to repent.

2. Education is important here. In this regard, we should benefit from the experiences of numerous revolutions in tackling this issue. We believe that education is a basic weapon in tackling the negative aspects that usually accompany revolutionary action.

3. The factions responsible for tackling this issue must be identified. This has been recently done through confining the responsibility of tackling this issue to the Unified National Leadership [of the Intifadah]. Any decision made by this leadership in this regard must be unanimous or semi-unanimous. Moreover, evidence and documents must be used to substantiate the charges brought against collaborators. And then, collaborators must be given a chance to repent. If they persist in their collaboration and fail to repent, then their execution will be justified.

We believe that this issue can be contained in this manner. However, we should not forget that this issue is one of the major tasks facing all revolutions.

[Abu-Matar] What is the current status of Syrian-Palestinian ties, considering all the reconciliation efforts in which the PFLP played a prominent role?

[Habash] The latest information that we have in this regard concerns the meeting that was held in New York between Brother Faruq Qaddumi "Abu-al-Lutf" and Faruq al-Shar'. The information relayed to us by Comrade Taysir Qubba'ah, who attended this meeting, invoked optimism over the arrival of a Palestinian delegation in Damascus to discuss bilateral ties and prepare for a visit to Damascus by Brother President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. However, ensuing developments, especially the deliberations of the PLO Central Council meetings recently held in Baghdad, showed that efforts to improve bilateral ties have faltered. The issue of Syrian-Palestinian ties was not the major topic on the agenda of these meetings. However, this topic was discussed at these meetings. I believe that some Palestinian parties do not have the desire to walk this path to its natural conclusion. I am of the opinion that it is difficult to make a single overall judgment on Syrian-Palestinian ties that would be found to be correct during all phases, since these ties have never been static. At a certain point in time, we in the meetings of our central bodies held the

Syrian side responsible for the deterioration in bilateral ties. At that time, we were fully aware that even if the road to Damascus was not closed, it was not open, either, no matter what the Palestinians might do. As for the present, it pains me to hold the Palestinian side mainly responsible for the failure to improve bilateral ties. This does not absolve the Syrian side of its responsibility in this regard, for if the Syrian side takes the initiative of releasing the Palestinian brothers detained in Syrian jails, this would undoubtedly play a positive role in improving bilateral ties. Besides, there are Syrian quarters which are not enthusiastic over the normalization of ties. However, despite the failure to improve these ties, I believe that the logical course of events will push toward a restoration of this relationship for the following reasons:

First, Syria is an Arab country and the PLO is supposed to maintain good ties with all Arab states without exception. Second, Syria is an Arab frontline state. All frontline states have a special significance, and this importance must be made manifest in the nature of the ties binding the PLO to these states. I would like to indicate that Syria has occupied territories. Consequently, the PLO and Syria have common objective interests. Fourth [as published], a careful review of the stands taken by both the PLO and Syria would show that the two sides agree on a very important point—namely, the call for convening an international conference despite the political differences that they have. The PLO views the international conference as the main mechanism to be used to achieve its objectives. Likewise, Syria views this conference as the mechanism to be used to regain the Golan. Therefore, I believe that the PLO and Syria will find themselves walking the same path to serve their common interests when some Palestinian forces see the failure of the U.S. resolutions. They will do so when these Palestinian forces realize that that the only way to see a Palestinian state emerge is to conduct a reconsideration of the tasks and priorities in a manner that will make them realize that the materialization of the state is impossible without a change in the balance of power and that this involves a militant act. Such a change will require the formulation of a long-term plan.

'Arafat Criticizes Libya for Lack of Support

JN2812131889 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 28 Dec pp 1, 23

[Exclusive report]

[Text] Amman—During his recent visit to Amman, the Palestinian leader, President Yasir 'Arafat, held a meeting with members of the Palestine National Council members residing in Amman. Within the context of his talk about supporting the intifadah and the payment of Arab financial obligations to the PLO, which Saudi Arabia adheres to in a brotherly and honest manner, it was observed that 'Arafat made harsh criticisms against the Libyan Jamahiriyah because it froze $160 million—the sum of the contributions deducted monthly from Palestinians working in Libya.

'Arafat said: Brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, the leader of the Jamahiriyah, must order the transfer of those sums to the PLO so that it can continue its support to, and commitment toward its people in the occupied homeland. He said these sums rightfully belong to the Palestinians and they must be returned to them.

A PLO source told AKHBAR AL-USBU' that less than a year ago the Libyan Jamahiriyah also stopped its regular monthly and yearly support to all Palestinian factions that broke away from the PLO and to certain Lebanese parties and forces. It also announced the dissolving of the Arab Revolutionary Forces Front, whose headquarters were in Tripoli and which had branches in Syria and Lebanon.

'Arafat Wants Mediation on Charges in Rumania

JN2912091289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0825 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 29 Dec (WAKH)—Press reports published in Abu Dhabi today say that over the past 2 days, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has been holding urgent contacts with senior officials in Eastern and Western Europe to intercede with the new Romanian leadership to limit the effects of the Israeli countercampaign against the Palestinians and some Arab nationals residing in Romania.

The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD cites informed Palestinian sources as saying that as a result of these contacts, a high-ranking official from the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry went to Bucharest, met with leaders of the National Salvation Front in Romania, and discussed with them the anti-Palestinian rumor campaign being circulated by Israel among the Romanian people. He also urged the Front to issue an official statement denying these rumors.

The sources pointed out that official French and West German circles interceded with the new Romanian authorities to save the life of Fu'ad al-Bitar, Palestinian ambassador in Bucharest, after he was trapped during the events in one of the hospitals for physiotherapy in the center of the Romanian capital.

PLO's Milhim on Soviet Jews, Jordanian Moves

JN2812104889 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Dec 89 pp 22, 19

[By Tawfiq al-'Abid]

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad Milhim has asserted that the PLO is following closely the emigration of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine. He said that the settlement of those immigrants in the West Bank and Gaza will result in the construction of new settlements, or the enlargement of existing ones, as well as the confiscation of more Arab lands.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, Milhim said that these waves of immigration will build an army to support the Israeli Government's policy in its continued denial of the Palestinian people's rights and in oppressing and expelling them from their homeland.

He added: I do not believe that the Soviet Union encourages emigration restricted to one direction (to Israel). We hope that international detente will not lead to more one-directional democracy and freedom. We hope that emigration also will have two directions and that the emigrant will have the freedom to choose the country he wishes to go to without restrictions or infringement on the national rights of other peoples.

In this regard, Milhim referred to the measures which the Austrian Government used to follow as the reception station for Soviet emigrants. He said that one of the conditions for receiving those people was that Austria should not be used as a transit route to Israel and settlement in the West Bank and Gaza because this would be considered a violation of the conditions of emigration and passage.

He said: The Soviet Union's declared policy is based on considering settlement in the occupied territories illegitimate, and on considering different kinds of settlements as a block to the success of the peace process, a major obstacle to peace, and a cause for increased tension in the Middle East.

He added: If Jewish emigration takes place from the Soviet Union to these illegitimate settlements, then it contradicts the Soviet policy in the region. Hence, the PLO does not think that this friendly country, which fully supports our rights, approves of this emigration.

He explained that the PLO delegation which visited Moscow recently brought up the subject of Soviet Jews' emigration to the occupied territories. He also said the subject was discussed by the extraordinary meeting of the Arab foreign ministers in the Arab League's headquarters last month.

Answering a question, Milhim said: So far, the PLO has not received the U.S. reply to the PLO's reply on Bakers' plan. He asserted that the PLO adheres to the Palestinian constants and the PLO Central Council's resolutions. He also said the PLO Executive Committee will hold a meeting during the first half of next month, the venue of which has not yet been fixed, to discuss the peace process and developments in the Palestine question.

He added: The Israeli position is well known to us. There are still major differences in viewpoints regarding the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. The PLO considers this dialogue a step toward the convening of the international conference and adheres to its right to name members to the delegation for a dialogue which has an open agenda.

Regarding his assessment of the Jordanian move concerning the measures which followed the decision to disengage legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, Milhim said: With an open heart and mind, the Jordanian Government adopted resolutions that will facilitate matters for the West Bank residents, such as passports and movement facilities.

He also said: These measures have been applied in practice. Those who come from the West Bank find many facilities on the bridges and in the other competent departments.

He expressed the hope that other Arab countries will follow Jordan's example to facilitate the work and residence of Palestinian citizens and import Palestinian agricultural products to strengthen the steadfastness of the kinfolk on their lands and support the intifadah, which enters its 3d year.

Egypt

Mubarak Receives Sudanese Official, Message

NC2412114589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1122 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—This morning President Husni Mubarak received Colonel Muhamad al-Amin Khalifah, member of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Command Council [SNSRCC].

Col Khalifah arrived in Cairo early this morning, carrying with him a written message from SNSRCC Chairman Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir.

Lebanon's Al-Hirawi Sends Message to Mubarak

NC2412184489 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi today sent a message to President Husni Mubarak. The message was delivered to Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by Hasan Shash, Egyptian ambassador to Lebanon.

Ambassador Shash briefed Dr 'Abd-al-Majid on developments in Lebanon.

Mubarak Meets With Iraqi Correspondents

NC2512142689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received a delegation from the Iraqi Journalists Union Council at the presidential office today. The delegation is led by Council Chairman Tahir al-Hudhayfi. The meeting was attended by Egyptian press doyen Makram Ahmad Makram and Iraqi Ambassador in Cairo Nabil Najm.

Afterwards, Makram Ahmad Makram said that a brotherly dialogue on Egyptian-Iraqi relations was held between President Mubarak and the Iraqi journalists' delegation. He said that President Mubarak underlined the depth, strategy, and importance of this relationship and also the depth of his relationship with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, who he described as a "man who honors his word." President Mubarak said that this description means a lot to him.

The press doyen added that President Mubarak dealt with the problem of Egyptian workers in Iraq, saying it is a transient problem that would not affect bilateral relations and that he appreciates Iraq's difficult circumstances as well as the Egyptian workers' conditions.

The press doyen went on to say that during the meeting President Mubarak stressed that any Arab relationship must serve Arab solidarity and that Egypt will not build its relationship with one Arab country at the expense of another one because Egypt is basically opposed to blocs.

The president also said that the contacts and meetings taking place now intend to strengthen Arab solidarity.

President Mubarak also dealt with the importance of Arab-African cooperation, stressing the importance of strengthening it. He said: We are facing a number of changes in the world, including what is taking place in a new and united Europe and the developments in Eastern Europe.

Makram Ahmad Makram said that the meeting was not so much a press interview as a dialogue about the nature and depth of Arab relations.

Iraqi delegation leader Tahir al-Hudhayfi expressed the delegation's pride in meeting President Mubarak despite the latter's many engagements. He described the meeting as an honor for both the Iraqi and Egyptian press. He said: In his cordial talk with us, the president was clear and charged us with a responsibility in addition to being journalists. This responsibility is that we should perform our press mission truthfully in order to strengthen the Arab stand at the bilateral and collective Arab levels. He added that the meeting represents the climax of the Iraqi delegation's activities with the Egyptian Press Association. It also represents a crowning of the Iraqi delegation's continuing contacts with Egyptian news media establishments.

Qatari Papers Interview Mubarak on Arab Issues

NC2712174889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has stressed that Qatari Amir Shaykh Khalifah Ibn-Hamad Al Thani's visit to Egypt in early January will provide a good opportunity for the Egyptian people to meet with a respected Arab leader. He said: This visit will provide an opportunity for an exchange of information, ideas, and analyses on bilateral and international issues.

In an interview with the Qatari papers AL-RAYAH and AL-SHARQ, President Mubarak said: The Qatari people are a fraternal people. We are bound together by the strongest and oldest ties, particularly with the amir of Qatar, a wise man whom I respect as a brother and as a friend.

President Mubarak added that the time and venue for his meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad have not been set and stressed that the issue of restoring diplomatic relations between Egypt and Syria could be discussed anytime and anywhere. He also stressed that it is against Egypt's principles to mend relations with one Arab country at the expense of another, that Egypt is not a proponent of blocs, and that Egypt is not a country that establishes relations with one country in order to spite a third country. He added that the Arab nation's interest requires that the air be cleared.

President Mubarak said that the problem of Egyptian workers in Iraq is the "result of an economic crisis and

workers' claims," stressing that this problem is being resolved and that it is not a topic for discussion in the press at present.

The president noted that no agreement has been reached yet on the formation of a Palestinian delegation to negotiate with Israel. He stressed that Egypt is not the spokesman for the PLO, but coordinates with it constantly and both sides discuss what they should agree on and work with.

President Mubarak denied reports that Libya will open a Libyan interests office in Alexandria and said it was agreed that the office will be in Cairo. He noted that relations between the two countries are proceeding well and that there are no problems.

President Mubarak also said in the interview that Egypt is working to find common ground between Sudan and the John Garang movement so that Sudan will be united and will direct its efforts toward development instead of exhausting its resources on fighting and shedding blood and so that foreign interference to help one party or another gain power will be ended. He added that Egypt is working to bring the two Sudanese parties together and have them reach agreement, particularly since the meeting held in Nairobi succeeded to a large degree and cannot be said to have failed. He expressed the hope that their views will converge and that the two sides will produce results.

President Mubarak denied that John Garang paid a secret visit to Cairo and said: We have absolutely no secret visits or meetings. Whenever an official comes to Cairo airport and enters Egypt, the whole world hears about it. He stressed that it is important for the legitimate government in Sudan and the Garang movement to agree and to proceed toward a solution. He said: It is not important whether they meet in Cairo, Alexandria, Addis Ababa, or anywhere else. What is important is that they have common ground between them for solving their problems so that they can concentrate on their people's development. He noted that Egypt has no objection to holding a meeting between them on its territory.

Regarding the Lebanese issue, President Mubarak expressed the hope that the legitimate government in Lebanon will become stronger and that the Lebanese will agree and unite for the sake of Lebanon's security, unity, and independence and so that all foreign forces will be withdrawn. He said: We must join forces and cooperate to achieve this.

President Mubarak declared that Egypt has not submitted a request to have the Arab League returned to Cairo. He said: This matter concerns all Arab countries and not Egypt alone. The Arab League Charter stipulates that Egypt is the headquarters of the Arab League and this matter is up to the Arab summit. If the Arabs want to bring the Arab League headquarters to Cairo, then they are welcome in this country which is their own. If they want to amend the League's Charter, then this is up to the Arab summit.

President Mubarak added that he will not say anything more on this topic and that he, like everybody else, hears claims that the Arab League will return to Egypt by the end of summer.

President Mubarak then dealt with his mediation between Mauritania and Senegal. He said that he is trying to ease tension between the two sides and that this problem cannot be solved in 1, 2, or even 6 months. He added that he is trying to arrange a meeting of the Mauritanian and Senegalese presidents and he hopes that they will agree to this, but he noted that this needs a great deal of time and effort. He said that he is working to reduce tension on the border between the two African countries as a first step in resolving their problems fully in the interests of the peoples of the two countries.

President Mubarak also spoke about the Eritrean problem. He said that there is a dialogue on this problem and that Egypt is involved in this with its brothers in Eritrea and with the Ethiopian Government. He expressed his belief that the talks are proceeding in the right direction following the meeting between the two sides in Atlanta. He added that he is working with the various parties in Eritrea so that they can unite and that he received a delegation from them.

Replying to a question on Egyptian-Algerian relations following the media campaign in each country in the wake of a soccer match between them, President Mubarak said: Sports competition should not damage relations between two Arab peoples. He stressed that this problem has been dealt with and that at the time the Egyptian press dealt with it from the viewpoint of competition and without any insults.

Answering a question on unity between the two Yemens, President Mubarak said: If they want to establish unity, then Egypt blesses this as long as it is not directed against anyone. If they become a single state under a single president, then this means that the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen will become a member of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], but it is too early to talk about its joining the ACC now.

Asked about Palestinian membership in the ACC, President Mubarak said that he has not heard of this and that much of what is being said is baseless.

The president then dealt with reports about Egyptian-Argentinian-Iraqi cooperation in the field of missile manufacturing. He said that this is a very old story. He denied reports that the United States had intervened to prevent Egypt from working on such projects. He stressed that there is no intervention in Egyptian decisions because Egypt is an independent and sovereign state. He added: Egypt benefits from U.S. aid, but it makes its own decisions. However, if the United States is talking about missiles in the region in general, then this is something else. He went on to say: If there is a U.S. threat to Iraq because of the al-'Abid missile, then the threat should be made to Israel too. He added: If we are talking about missiles, and nuclear weapons too, then

this should apply to everyone and not only to Iraq. If they want one party to stop, then all must do so and no country should be allowed to have what another country cannot.

In the interview, President Mubarak touched on current developments in Eastern Europe, particularly in Romania. He said this is a lesson from which benefits should be derived.

Responding to a question on the impact of recent developments in Eastern Europe on the Arab situation, the president remarked that the current rapid developments will have a bearing on the map of Europe and on international relations in general. There will be rapprochement between Eastern and Western Europe, and the transfer of technology and economic cooperation will make Europe an enormous economic power, he said.

President Mubarak stressed the need for Arabs to coordinate their stands, cooperate, and achieve economic integration to put them in a better position to cope with these changes.

The president replied to a question on Arab ownership of housing units and land in Egypt. He asserted that there are no constraints or problems in this regard. Once Arab brothers apply for the ownership of housing units or land, the Council of Ministers grants its approval, and they can register the property at once, he said. He remarked that the cabinet's decision grants ownership rather than leasehold rights.

Touching on the issue of democracy and the emergency laws, the president pointed out that Egypt is living in a stage of democracy, which has been consolidated in our political life for years. He said Egypt did not have to wait for the winds of change which are blowing all over the world before it established democracy.

The president pointed out that emergency laws are designed to protect national security and citizens against terrorism, drugs , and illegal trading in foreign currency. He emphasized that these laws had not and will not be used to restrict political or press freedom. He further said that the imposition of emergency laws is an internal matter which the government decides according to circumstances. The government seeks to establish security and stability in Egypt and this will reflect positively on the entire region, he said.

Touching on the appointment of an Egyptian vice president, Mubarak pointed out that the Constitution does not obligate the president to appoint a deputy. However, he added, when the president finds a suitable person who is accepted by the people, he appoints a deputy when necessary.

Commenting on rumors of a cabinet reshuffle, the president said that when he decides to carry out a reshuffle, no journalist will learn of his decision. Mubarak asserted that he is satisfied with the performance of the present cabinet, noting that what he wants are active and productive people. He added that he is aware of the size of the task and that he is watching how work and production are progressing.

Speaking about the attack on Interior Minister Major General Zaki Badr, President Mubarak said: It was a reckless action of the kind that happens in many countries. Because of the freedom in Egypt, however, the people understand what is happening. Had there been no freedom of the press in Egypt and had the government used the emergency laws in full, then no one would have written about what is happening and no one would have known about it. He added that this was not the act of one individual, that there are extremist groups not only in Egypt but in all Arab and Muslim and non-Muslim countries, even in the United States, and that extremist actions take place in all countries, but are not given the same importance because the drug problem there has priority.

President Mubarak stressed that religious extremism exists in all Arab countries and that there is not a single Arab country that does not have religious extremism. However, he added, there is one difference, and that is that things in Egypt are in the open while no one writes or mentions anything about religious extremism in other countries. There is freedom of the press and freedom of opinion in Egyptian society. He stressed that extremism is a world phenomenon and not an Egyptian one.

In the interview, which AL-RAYAH and AL-SHARQ will publish tomorrow, President Mubarak dealt with the issue of the Egypt's Revolution Organization. He stressed that he has not spoken about or intervened in the case and that the trial is open and anyone can attend it. He also stressed that the government does not interfere with justice and its administration. He added that the press is not writing much about this case at present, which ended the clamor around it and that the trial itself has been adjourned.

President Mubarak also said that he is not interfering in the case of Khalid 'Abd-al-Nasir, that no one is interfering in Egyptian justice, and that the country cannot be left without laws, rules, or security so that any person can attack whomever he wants, or the situation will become chaotic.

Concluding the interview, President Mubarak said that Egypt is responsible for the security of every person who lives on its territory and that as long as Egypt allows someone to enter, then it is responsible for his security; otherwise Egypt will become lawless with no security or safety. He also stressed that Egypt is not a land for settling accounts as this would create unacceptable chaos and that all are equal before the law.

Mubarak, Al-Asad Scheduled To Meet in January

NC2812152689 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 CMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Informed sources at the Foreign Ministry have indicated that the month of January will witness a

meeting between President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. The sources stated that the exact date and venue of these meetings have not yet been specified. The sources added that the resumption of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Syria constitutes a positive step which will have tangible effects on developments in the situation in the Arab region.

Libyan Official in Cairo on 'Official Visit'

NC2412182289 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1755 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—Jum'ah Salim al-Arbash, Libyan secretary of the people's committee for electricity [name and title as received], and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Cairo this evening for a 4-day official visit to Egypt.

Upon arriving, Al-Arbash stated that the visit had been decided during the talks between the Libyan and Egyptian leaders in Marsa Matruh and Sidra.

He stated that he will meet with Eng Mahir Abazah, Egyptian minister of electricity and energy, to discuss a study on linking the Egyptian and Libyan electricity networks. He added that he will hold talks on technical and technological matters pertaining to bilateral cooperation in the field of electricity and energy.

Al-Arbash was received at the airport by Eng Mahir Abazah, minister of electricity and energy, and a number of officials in the Ministry of Electricity.

Microwave Network With Libya Nearing Completion

NC2412173089 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Eng Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport, communications, and maritime transport, has stated that the microwave network linking Egypt and Libya will be completed in the next few days.

He noted that telecommunications between Egypt and Arab Maghreb countries can go through Libyan territory after the network is completed. He added that it will be possible to link the Egyptian railways to the Tunisian and Algerian railways once the network is completed.

Daily Comments on Visit by Syria's Khaddam

NC2412062489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2215 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper asserts that Cairo's reception of Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam comes within the framework of Egyptian diplomacy and well-known course in supporting rapprochement, discarding disparity, and respecting Arab points of view based on mutual esteem. In its Sunday editorial, AL-JUMHURIYAH states that Cairo's reception of 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam is also within the context of Egypt's policy of clearing the Arab air.

AL-JUMHURIYAH refers to Khaddam's remarks on arrival in Cairo that when Arab relations are marred with some clouds, it reflects on the entire Arab nation, his emphasis that these are passing clouds, and that Syria and Egypt, who in the past shouldered the main burden in defending the Arab nation and its national interests, will inevitably continue to do so.

AL-JUMHURIYAH stresses that Cairo wholeheartedly welcomes the Arab brothers, proceeding from the premises of its Arab responsibilities, to forge ahead together confidently to make up for what was lost and to achieve Arab aspirations.

Foreign Ministry Delegation To Visit Damascus

NC2812151489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources said today that a delegation from the ministry will visit Damascus within the next few days to choose premises for the Egyptian Embassy in Damascus in the wake of the declaration yesterday on the resumption of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Syria.

According to the same sources, soon the two countries will exchange official delegations as part of the effort to restore relations to what they were before. The sources added that this step will culminate in the upcoming meeting between Presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad, which is expected to produce positive results on the bilateral, Arab, and international levels.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources affirmed that the resumption of diplomatic relations between Cairo and Damascus will certainly promote Arab solidarity. This move, the sources noted, has proved that Egypt has thus completed its Arab efforts and brought them to a favorable conclusion by its successful diplomacy on the Arab level.

Paper on Israeli Reaction to Iraqi Missile Launch

NC2512123989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—AL-AHRAM warns Israel against taking any illegimate action against Iraq as a result of its success in launching a missile that can carry satellites into space. The paper advises Israel to keep its concern over the launching of this missile within legitimate boundaries. It indicates that any new Israeli adventure could upset the tendencies toward peace in the area.

In Monday's commentary, the paper says that if the Iraqi missile aroused Israel's anxiety, the recent Israeli missile aroused the entire region. The paper stresses that it is important for both parties to keep their anxiety within

legitimate boundaries, since it is a mutual anxiety and constitutes a kind of balance.

AL-AHRAM adds that there are Israeli forebodings that could arouse fears of this anxiety exceeding what is logical.

The paper points in this respect to Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's response to Knesset questions in which he said: "Israel must make an appropriate decision regarding the Iraqi development."

The paper notes that this statement is open to interpretation. Ostensibly, it could denote the need to prepare for confronting any Iraqi progress in this regard by similar or superior progress; inherently, it could mean taking real measures to check this progress. Naturally, this last assumption is substantiated by the precedent of Israel's destroying the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981.

AL-AHRAM notes that Israel's erroneous interpretation of the launching of the Iraqi missile increases the need to be cautious about Israel's hidden intentions because it views Israel as "conditioned for military use" on the grounds that the missile appeared immediately after the Iraq-Iran war. This indicates that the missile's manufacture began and developed during the war so that it might be added to the array of missiles actually used in the war.

The paper concludes its commentary by saying that these interpretations could be Israel's excuse for a new adventure that would turn the trends of peace topsy-turvy in the region. Therefore, this necessitates caution.

Al-Sharif on Arab-African Media Cooperation

NC2412090489 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0520 GMT 24 Dec 89

[From the "Listners Questions" program]

[Text] Listner Mustafa 'Abd-al-Baqi from al-Dawrah al-Kabirah in 'Abidin in Cairo asks: How would Egypt and African countries confront the satellite and media war? And is there Egyptian-African cooperation in satellite broadcasting? Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif responds:

[Begin Al-Sharif recording] Media cooperation in Africa takes place through several organizations. One of these is the Union of National Radio and Television Organization of Africa, URTNA, which has a long list of efforts in which Egypt took part.

Egypt recently invited URTNA's board of directors to a meeting in Cairo. Egypt and the OAU cosponsored a symposium that discussed the use of satellites in African media. The symposium issued several recommendations that we hope will help the URTNA as well as African information ministers make the best use of European telecommunications satellites—the existing satellites and the more advanced types that will replace them within the next few months. URTNA can also benefit from the Arab satellite, for that satellite can cover most African countries, except maybe one or two countries in the south. It is therefore possible for African countries to use that satellite. This is true for the currently used ARABSAT-1 as well as any of the more advanced satellites for which cost-benefit studies are being prepared.

At the recent Arab information ministers meeting, Egypt presented clear ideas on Arab-African dialogue, especially addressing the media. Africa can benefit from such a dialogue and cooperation, for the media is gaining increased importance in our time and the Arab satellite can be used to promote African interests and the Arab-African dialogue. [end recording]

Al-Rayyan, Others Receive 10 Years 'Hard Labor'

JN2412110489 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 22 Dec 89 p 1

[By 'Ala' Rizq]

[Text] The Cairo Criminal Court yesterday sentenced Ahmad Tawfiq 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Rayyan to 10 years in prison with hard labor and meted out the same punishment against Muhammad Radwan, manager of Al-Ahram Bank, and Muhammad Mukhtar, the bank's branch director in Misr al-Jadidah. The latter two persons were also dismissed from their posts.

The court ordered the three defendants to return a total of 644,875 Egyptian pounds and fined them the same amount.

The prosecution charged the two bank officials with disbursing $275,000, Al-Rayyan's balance in September 1988, thus ignoring the executive seizure imposed on the amount for tax purposes. They were also charged with forging bank papers to make it appear as if the executive seizure papers reached the bank after disbursing the aforementioned amount. The two bank officials cashed a check of this amount after duty hours and borrowed from other banks.

Ahmad al-Rayyan was amazed when he heard the sentence. As for the two bank officials, they did not attend the session as they had previously been released.

Counselor Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Aziz Hafiz chaired the court session. Counselors Jamal al-Qaysuni and 'Adil Abu-al-Rus attended. The secretaries attending the court session were Sirr Hasan Mahmud and Hamdi Mabarrah.

New Oil Discoveries, Drilling Plans Reported

JN2512164589 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 24 Dec 89 pp 1, 2

[By Nasir al-Ba'thi]

[Text] Three oil test wells will be drilled next year. Studies have confirmed that these wells hold commercial quantities of oil.

Geologist Ahmad Shawqi 'Abdin, head of the Gulf of Suez Petroleum Company (GUPCO), has said that during the coming phase, the company will concentrate on oil prospecting in the center of the Sinai for the first time. It will also prospect in the western desert and 10 wells will be drilled there, he stated.

He also said that the company's output in 1989 reached 164 million barrels with an average between 450,000 and 500,000 barrels per day. He further said the company made four new oil discoveries during the same year whose output is estimated at 33,000 barrels a day.

The new discoveries include a 244-foot-deep oil layer to the north of Uktubar Field, which is the biggest oil field to be discovered since 1983 and whose output is estimated at 20,000 barrels a day of high-grade (grade 39) oil. The second discovery is also to the north of Uktubar, and its output is estimated at 8,000 barrels of grade 29 oil. The third discovery is to the southwest of Uktubar with an estimated daily output of 2,000 barrels of grade 24 oil. The final discovery is next to the Yulyu [July] Field with a daily output of 3,000 barrels.

Mauritania

Cooperation Agreement Signed With PRC

AB2412090689 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Summary] A draft agreement for cooperation in the educational sector was signed this morning in Nouakchott between our country and the PRC. Under this draft agreement, the Chinese side had agreed to send two Chinese language teachers to Mauritania and to build a 24-seat electronic language laboratory. It will also grant five scholarships for 2-year studies in China to the best 3d-year students of the Chinese language section of the National University of Nouakchott, which will also receive Chinese language textbooks and other books in Chinese.

African Prisoners Released; Sentences Reduced

AB1912182189 Paris AFP in French 1357 GMT 19 Dec 89

[Text] Nouakchott, 19 Dec (AFP)—Five black Africans, held in Mauritania after they were sentenced for publishing the "Manifesto of the Oppressed Black Mauritanians" in 1986, were released today in line with a reduction of sentence announced on 12 December by the Mauritanian authorities, it was learned from official sources in Nouakchott.

This reduction of sentence was followed by the release of 14 people on the 5th anniversary of the coming to power of Colonel Maoouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, the Mauritanian head of state. Most of the detainees released as a result of this measure had been sentenced in September 1986 in connection with the publication of the "Manifesto of the Oppressed Black Mauritanians," which denounced the annexation of the Mauritanian state by the Moors.

The five detainees whose release was announced today are Sidi Mamadou Ba, Mamadou Boca Ba, Fara Ba, Mamadou Yero Kane, and Idrissa Ba.

Canary Island Delegation Arrives for Visit

AB1712094989 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0730 GMT 18 Dec 89

[Text] Mr Loronzo Olarte Cullen, president of the Government of the Canary Islands, arrived in Nouakchott yesterday at the head of a delegation comprising the minister of trade and transport and that of agriculture, water resources, and fishery of the Carary Islands Government. He was welcomed by the minister of national education, who acted for the minister of foreign affairs and cooperation. In a press statement, Olarte pointed out that his visit is part of efforts to strengthen cooperation between Spain and Mauritania, which is exemplary in all fields. He added that talks with the Mauritanian authorities will center on trade, transport, agriculture, and fishing

Mauritania and the Canary Islands are linked by economic and trade relations. In recent years, the volume of trade between Mauritania and the Canary Islands has reached 20 billion ouguiyas.

Agreement Signed for Airport Expansion

AB2012125289 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0730 GMT 20 Dec 89

[Summary] The Mauritanian minister of planning and employment, Moustapha Ould Abderahmane, and the managing director of the Central Fund for Economic Cooperation [CCCE], Philippe Jurgensen, yesterday signed a loan agreement for Fr 57 million. The money will be used to finance the expansion of the Nouakchott air terminal. Under the program, the air terminal will be upgraded to accomodate international flights as well as those from Nouadhibou. The expansion program will enable it to receive up to 300,000 passengers yearly and will be completed in less than 2 years.

Ministers Appoint New Information Officials

LD2812000389 Nouakchott Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Excerpts] The Council of Ministers met on Wednesday, 27 December 1989, under the chairmanship of Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Ould Taysa, chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation and head of state. [passage omitted] At the end, the Council of Ministers ratified the following special measures:

At the Information Ministry:
The director general—Mr Mohamed Ould Hamadi, former director of information;

The director of information—Mr Yahya Ould Hay, former director of external liaison;
The director of external liaison—Mr Ahmed Ould Moustepha, journalist;
The director of cinema—Mr Cimamado Samba, former assistant director of the Mauritanian company for journalism and publishing.

At the Mauritanian news agency:
The director general—Mr Moustepha Ould Abnou, former director general of the Mauritanian press agency;
The assistant director general—Mr Mohamed Salem Ould Abermal, former editing director of El Caab newspaper.

At the national printing house:
The director general—Hamouda Ould Bcour, former civilian administrator and secretary general of the ministry;
The assistant director general—Abdullah Suliman.

At Mauritanian television:
The director general—Mouhamed Ould Habib Ould Akel, journalist;
The assistant director general—Abdullahi Ould Mouhamed, former director of TV sector.

At Mauritanian radio:
The director general—Hamoud Ould Hadi, former director general of the Mauritanian radio and television organization;
The assistant director general—[name indistinct] former assistant director general of the Mauritanian radio and television organization.

Morocco

King Hassan Grants Interview to French TV

LD1812001189 Paris Antenne 2 Television in French 1944 GMT 17 Dec 89

[Interview with King Hassan II by unidentified correspondent for the "Hour of Truth" program; date, place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Correspondent] We are celebrating many anniversaries now, and suddenly I was struck by the fact that one has been forgotten—it was 30 years ago in 1959, this was the year of decolonization. Seventeen countries gained independence, and the world, Europe, the West looked to these newly independent countries hoping for a certain wisdom, thinking of their needs. Today 30 years later this same world is looking with more consideration, due to a certain feeling of failure—which you will tell me what you think about this—it is the Eastern countries that are emancipating themselves with this epic dimension we have seen. My question is what inspires you, during this feeling of failure 30 years after independence? Do you not fear that Europe, the West, the world will take more interest in the Eastern countries at the expense of the Maghreb countries, without mentioning the Third World in general? What is your feeling on this?

[Hassan] My feeling is a feeling of relief and of great admiration for Mr Gorbachev. I have not failed to say this, even on the most solemn occasions, the opening of parliament, for example, while drawing the attention of the representatives of these countries, and telling them to be careful and look more closely through their binoculars. Everything is changing and is analyzed differently. Personally I can only applaud when I see that henceforth what is happening only strengthens my geopolitical idea—which I have always had—that there will be no more horizontal conflicts in Europe. And I thought that as long as there are no more horizontal conflicts, since both sides have nuclear weapons, each as destructive as the other, that what will happen, my God...

[Correspondent, interrupting] Thus vertical.

[Hassan] All these people will work out their tensions vertically. Thank God, no one is working out their frustrations either vertically or horizontally [as heard]. You spoke to me about Europe and its effects in the Maghreb. When I had the pleasure of chairing the French-African foreign ministers follow-up conference in the presence of Mr Roland Dumas—who was there—I made a speech. I told the Africans, this East-West rapprochement must not frighten us. It should not frighten us. On the contrary, prepare yourselves for the date, because Europe has been building up quietly to 1992 on the basis of a clientele of 330 million. Now it will find itself with a market of 700 million consumers. From where will it get the difference? That means our potatoes will no longer be stopped in the spring, our oranges will be seen in a different light, our blue jeans, our products, our crafts, all we produce, our materials...[changes thought] I told the Africans to be ready, because there is a gap which must be filled and a market of 330 million will not be converted from 1 day to the next for 700 million. We are there. I look on this aspect of life with great serenity. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Is your position not a little more difficult since the Union of the United Maghreb? One cannot help noticing a resurgence of the Saharan affair, and thus your relations with Algeria, to be a little more direct than you might like.

[Hassan] You know, I woke up one morning and wrote a sentence which has been my theme, and which is this: You have to know how to manage the inconveniences of grand designs. I was speaking about the Sahara, but it is all the more valid for the Maghreb. These two [words indistinct] will linger for 2, 3, or 4 years perhaps, but nothing lasts—neither the good nor the bad, and we could not be more at the bottom of the wave than we are at the moment.

[Correspondent] In your relations with Algeria?

[Hassan] Yes, and in general. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Is it your impression that the al-Ta'if agreements, which you among others initiated as a member of the tripartite committee, made too many

concessions to Syria, and do you think Syria is conscientious and capable of respecting them?

[Hassan] Personally if I did not think Syria was capable of a minimum of credibility, I would have told the two heads of state who are friends—whatever problems I have with Algeria, President Chadli [Bendjedid] is a man who is very dear to me, and God is my witness that we love each other very much—I would have told them: Let us not try; it is not worth it and Syria will never accept. We all credited it, each for his own part, with a minimum of seriousness and will to do something. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] A recent Amnesty International report is very damning for Morocco, particularly regarding torture in the prisons. Isn't your majesty troubled by this report? What are you going to do to remedy the situation if torture exists in your prisons?

[Hassan] I don't know what will be, what will be [repeats himself] my rate of credibility in this field but I can assure you of one thing—that is if I knew that 1 percent of what has been written in this report—which I have never read—existed, I can assure that I would not sleep and I would do what should be done so this stops. Secondly—and this very serious, in fact that is why they haven't come—I asked Amnesty International to come. I asked it officially and I personally asked through many friends, among whom are one who is very dear and who is sitting on my right, Mr [Michel] Jobert [former French foreign minister]. [passage omitted] Thus I am awaiting Amnesty International to respond, and I think it will be confounded. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] I would like to talk a bit about relations between France and Morocco, and in particular, economic relations. France's share in trade between the two countries is tending to decline from year to year. Have you an explanation why this happening, and do you regret it?

[Hassan] Naturally, first I regret it. It is true in certain fields, but it is sectoral and it is counterbalanced, and I must say that since the seventies and until now we have not had real economic financial problems with France. I must say that from the various French governments which have succeeded each other we have had the greatest understanding. Naturally France itself is not so free in its movements since it has entered the mechanism of Europe; it has certain limitations in its actions. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Majesty, facing up to international terrorism, would you participate in an axis of cooperation and defense committing Morocco, Spain, and France?

[Hassan] A defense axis against international terrorism? Why only us three? Okay, I agree, I am ready. We are already a member of a club called the Trevi Club. Although we are not Europeans, we are among the countries which are exceptional members. We are very happy to take on the responsibility which is a historical and humanitarian responsibility. Not anybody enters this club. I am very happy that Morocco, let's say, was chosen and elected as a member.

[Correspondent] The Trevi Club, in fact, met yesterday in Paris and your Interior Minister Mr Basri attended. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Equatoria Urged To Mobilize Against Dinkas

EA2312210989 Omdurman Domestic Service in English 1140 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the father, the son, and the holy ghost: Today in our Anyanya-2 [A-2] English program, we are presenting information to Equatorians in particular.

Equatorians have been sleeping too much. We are asking the Equatorians to awake, to watch, and to move. Equatorians should awake. We should not allow the Dinkas to destroy our land. We should watch out. We should not waste our time on telling stories, on arguments, on thinking, and on deciding, and to wasting our time. We find that our land has been and is devastated by the SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army].

Equatorians, prepare to move. Equatorians, Equatoria is our fatherland. Equatorians, we are calling on you to think and decide now. We have been very cautious enough, we have been very patient enough. By now our land would have moved ahead, we would have developed. We know that shari'a will never be implemented in our land. Even when 1983 shari'a law was passed by Numayri, this shari'a was never implemented in Equatoria Region. We Equatorians should not waste our time, because this is a reality that shari'a will never be implemented in Equatoria Region. We should not allow the Dinkas to deceive us and use us and waste our time, while they have sent most of their children overseas to study—in Kenya, Uganda, in Europe—while we Equatorians are locked up inside the Sudan and our children are out from schools. All our schools are closed. We are losing Equatorians. Let us come out and mobilize. Let us recruit our children. Why should we allow the SPLA to grab our children—children at the age of 14 which they use. They send them to the frontline so that they are destroyed, and then they come and sit and enjoy the fruits. [passage omitted]

Let the Equatorians move. Let us all join A-2. Let us recruit all the boys, take them and mobilize, and force the Dinkas out from Equatoria Region. Our problem is the Dinkas, our problem is not shari'a, because we know shari'a will not come in Equatoria. [passage omitted] Fellow brothers, Equatorians, we should not be deceived by this stupid idea that there will be shari'a imposed on us in the south. This is impossible. Shari'a should not be our issue. Our issue should be equality, equal destribution of wealth, (?and) social and cultural, economic and

political liberty to all, and under the federal system of government, we are going to get these. We are going to develop. [passage omitted]

Fellow Equatorians, we have no choice. We must fight; call our country. Equatoria is our homeland. We must fight for it. We must mobilize and unite with the Nuer. We must unite with Murles. We must unite with our people in Kapoeta. We must unite with our people in the Langos. We must unite with the Latukas, with the Madis, the Acholis, the Kakwa, the Zandes. We must unite with the Fertit. We must control the madness of these people.

Fellow Equatorians, we must fight—there is no choice. Equatoria is to mobilize. We must raise arms. We must use our resources for even buying guns. We must try to force the Dinka out of Equatoria Region, or to make them understand that they are wasting our time. [passage omitted]

We said we do not want shari'a in Equatoria. Let them have shari'a in the northern Sudan. Why should we prevent them from having shari'a in the northern Sudan? Let us have our own system in our own areas. I am sure they will not force us to have shari'a in the south, in Equatoria Region. They will never do it. They know it, and we know it. Why should we waste our time?

Fellow Equatorians, we have no choice. Our land has been devastated. Our people have been devastated. Our girls—virgin girls—are being looted and they are being raped.

Fellow Equatorians, I am appealing to you. We must mobilize now. We must join A-2. We must mobilize and we must buy guns. We must work hard. We must force the Dinkas out from Equatoria Region so that we create stability for social, cultural, economic and political development of Equatoria and contribute in developing Sudan under the federal system of government. We must unite with the Nuers.

Fellow Equatorians, we have no choice. We are forced by the Dinkas and we must do it, and the Dinkas will come along. And if they come to their senses, we will cooperate with them. We have no choice, because we hate nobody. We don't hate any Sudanese. We are all Sudanese. We must work for the welfare of the Sudanese people. Thank you.

SPLA Denies Khartoum Battle Victory Claims

AB2312092989 Paris AFP in English 1224 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Nairobi, Dec 21 (AFP)—The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Thursday [21 December] dismissed a government claim to have destroyed 10 rebel camps and accused Khartoum of announcing "imaginary victories" to boost Army morale.

The military High Command said in Khartoum Wednesday [20 December] that government forces had destroyed nine rebel camps in Upper Nile Province including major encampments at Danuk, Tangarial and Ser and one at Loth in Equatoria Province. The military government said 17 rebels had been killed but gave no dates for the attacks.

Senior SPLA leader Lam Akol, interviewed here before returning to Addis Ababa, said the four camps named by the government either did not exist or were places which were entirely uninhabited. There had been no military confrontations between the rebels and Sudanese Government forces since fighting around Rumbek in Al Buhayrat Province last month, he said.

"They think that if they can claim imaginary victories they will raise the morale of the Army."

Dr. Lam, who led an SPLA delegation to peace talks with Khartoum which broke down December 5, said the junta of General 'Umar Hassan al-Bashir, who took power June 30, was increasingly under siege since the failure of the talks.

The talks, chaired by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, foundered after less than a week largely over the issue of Islamic shari'ah law, which the SPLA vehemently opposes, particularly its penal code on floggings and amputations.

Equatoria Governor Delivers Christmas Message

EA2412215689 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Major General Allison Magaya, military governor of Equatoria, spoke to the region's inhabitants on the occasion of Christmas, in which he stressed efforts being made to bring about peace in the south, particularly in Equatoria Region, whose citizens reject war. His excellency reviewed the negative aspects of the war and its destructive effects on the country's economy and its citizens' lives.

Maj Gen Allison condemned the outlaws shooting down the aircraft belonging to the French organization Doctors Without Borders.

Upper Nile Region Governor on Local Situation

EA2412215289 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Lieutenant Colonel Mulwal Deng, military governor of the Upper Nile Region, has stressed the stable security and food situation, referring to the regional government's determination and readiness to resettle displaced people and returnees from the rebel ranks to create an atmosphere of stability in the region's workplaces. He explained the stable security in the region was shown by the wish of fighters from the rebel ranks to return and settle peacefully in their areas, and by the employees' wish to return to work.

Lt Col Mulwal Deng stressed the commitment of citizens of the Upper Nile Region to the decisions of the revolution and its efforts to achieve a durable peace in the country. He said measures had been taken to stop migration by workers to the capital. His excellency issued a decision to stop the salaries of employees who refused to return to work. He added the regional government had drawn up a full plan to resettle displaced people. He asked donor organizations to offer facilities for setting up temporary camps in the villages around Malakal. He pointed out the regional government expected more returnees in the coming period.

Supply Barges Reach Malakal in Upper Nile Region

EA2412165589 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 0450 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Brigadier Pio Yukwan, member of the Revolution Command Council and political supervisor of the Upper Nile Region, arrived in Malakal yesterday to receive tugs carrying supplies for the region's citizens. Following his arrival, his excellency made the following report to the radio reporter:

[Begin Yukwan recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. We arrived in Malakal today from Khartoum to receive the tugs coming from Khartoum that carry supplies and building materials. There were about nine tugs from Khartoum, or from Kosti, with about (?45) barges, loaded with supplies and other materials. (?We came) to a big reception. We learned from the citizens there was complete stability in Upper Nile Region.

During my meeting with the governor and (?the committee) yesterday, I learned [words indistinct], (?he reported that there were many), about 500 families of citizens who several years ago had migrated far from towns. The governor (?expressed to me) the readiness to receive the citizens. I also learned that after the recovery of Kaka by the people's armed forces, a large number of rebels had started to surrender with their arms. There is a very large number [passage indistinct].

The governor and financial authorities assured they would accept and help them. God willing, all people will come because [words indistinct] (?they know) there is stability in the towns and there is a supply of goods. The price of sorghum was 1,500 [currency not specified]. I learned today it dropped to 300. [Words indistinct] (?we are) endeavoring to keep the communications lines between Malakal and Kosti and other regions going, so we are able to provide a lot of food, because the roads [word indistinct] are open.

All the citizens are prepared to return. The schools are operating. Praise be to God, thanks. The minister of health, Dr al-Sarrah, provided all the southern regions with 90 doctors. There are 30 in Upper Nile Region. [passage indistinct] I want to say that all the citizens in the entire region are happy. Many people have surrendered. Even the people who were [words indistinct], a number of them also surrendered (?with their arms) after the recovery of Kaka. Thanks.

Tunisia

Romanian Expresses 'Regret' Over Broadcasts

LD2812235389 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] In the wake of the news broadcast by Romanian radio and television that Arab elements existed among the pro-Ceausescu forces, Lyes Kastalli, Tunisia's ambassador in Bucharest, went to the Romanian Foreign Ministry and requested, in his capacity as doyen of the Arab diplomatic corps, clarification of this news.

Upon receiving Lyes Kastalli, a senior official at the Romanian Foreign Ministry expressed his utmost regret for the wrong information broadcast on Romanian radio and television; broadcasts which mentioned the existence of Arab elements among pro-Ceausescu forces.

Ben Ali Discusses Opposition Parties, Democracy

JN2612122089 Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 20 Dec 89 pp 5-10

[Interview with Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali by Kamil al-Sharqi in Tunis on 13 December]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] ALIF BA': Mr President, are you satisfied with the achievements that have been made in laying the bases of democracy in Tunisia, especially since you have a number of remarks on the opposition parties?

The president: First, I would like to say that the democratic approach that we have willingly adopted since the transformation brought about on 7 November falls within the framework of the comprehensive change that gained the support of all the national parties. This necessitates continuous and balanced work just like any other action related to other walks of life.

In light of this, the achievements that we have made in the area of laying the bases of democracy are only steps on a long road on which we are proceeding firmly to reinforce national reconciliation and to avoid dangers posed by rashness and extemporization which would inevitably lead to the deterioration of the democratic course on the one hand and the collapse of the state's pillars, law, and institutions on the other. As I said, entrenching democracy is a difficult process that requires persistence and patience. The implementation of democracy in a short time cannot satisfy all sides. This is a general phenomenon that applies not only to Tunisia. In fact, the stands adopted by some small parties in the developed countries which have lengthy experience in this field, toward the regimes in their countries during elections prove that democracy is a flexible and relative concept that has no logical limits.

Therefore, it is not strange to see criticism leveled by some opposition parties here and there in Tunisia, which is new to this developed way of political dealings. We are not embarrassed by this, but we accept it magnanimously and with good will. I explained this in detail during the speech I delivered on the second anniversary of the transformation. I stressed that the success of our democratic experience depends on a set of axioms that must be taken into consideration. These are:

—All parties should respect the laws of democracy and its requirements, and accept the results of honest competition, because this constitutes respect for the people's will.

—The opposition must not attack the electoral law or use it as a pretext to justify their failure, especially since there are no legal justifications, which usually appear in the form of violations before or after the elections.
—The opposition parties should acquire long experience in political action that would guarantee their presence in the national arena and that would enable them to enrich our political system.

By explaining these issues we do not mean to criticize the opposition or to exclude it from the political arena. In fact, what we have so far achieved for all the recognized political parties, in terms of reinforcing dialogue with them, helping them by providing all means for carrying out their activities, and consulting them on substantial issues, proves the importance we attach to the opposition's role in pushing the country's march forward.

Our recent call for the establishment of a higher council for the national charter to constitute a framework for consultations in matters deemed important to pluralism inside the constitutional establishments; our decision to increase the number of the social and economic council members; as well as our decision to legally organize the constitutional council of the republic are all witnesses to our perpetual endeavor which aims at enhancing the democratic trend and strengthening the values and principles without which pluralism cannot take a correct course and democracy cannot be stabilised.

Thus, you can see that what we have achieved in this short period is extremely important. However, there is no way to gain full satisfaction because the noble objective is far away. If we achieved what our ability allowed us to, other numerous and urgent demands are still waiting to be realized. We are heedful of these. In fact, we have trained ourselves to partially meet these demands according to a clear program and an unceasing endeavor. (passage omitted)

ALIF BA': Although adherence to democracy is a clear approach in your reign and newspapers are not closed as in the past, it happened two or three times that some newspapers were closed because of an article or a report. What is your opinion concerning the limits which should be heeded in democratic practice?

The president: To make things clear, I would like to point out that during the 2 years of the transformation process no newspaper was closed. All that happened is that during that period and on one occasion only, one issue of a weekly newspaper, which acted out of keeping with the press law, was confiscated. This is a measure adopted by all the countries of the world. After that, the paper continued to be issued. The authority did not take any decision which could obstruct its normal course of action. (passage omitted)

ALIF BA': A new term (reconciliation of the people with the authority) is being circulated in the political quarters. In your opinion, what is the basic part of this reconciliation, and do you think it will continue?

The president: The issue of reconciliation between the people and the authority has become a topical affair in many parts of the world. The deep changes that are taking place in many countries, despite the difference in reasons and motives, are at base a crisis of a loss of trust between the peoples of those countries and their authorities and the inability of both to reach formulae that can reinstate reconciliation and accord between the two parties to replace collision and boycotting.

As regarding us in Tunisia, we wanted the transformation process which we initiated more than 2 years ago, to be the point of departure between an era where the negative aspects accumulated to an extent that led to the disengagement of the bond of trust between people and authority and where laxness and indifference became discernible aspects of the country, and an era when we were eager to reinstate the values and principles which the Tunisian people have struggled for in order for them to become an indispensable part in the embodiment of their aspired society—a developed, cohesive, and solid society, permeated by the spirit of accord and where everybody seeks earnest work for the sake of national unity.

The big popular support which the transformation process received was an indication of the beginning of renewed trust between people and authority and the emergence of new horizons which promise the return of accord among citizens.

Depending on this, we took measures designed to give shape to this reconciliation. These measures included clearing the political climate, holding dialogues with the various schools of thought and political currents existing in the arena, and drawing up frameworks for this dialogue and for the democratic practice. And I am here referring to the parties law, the journalism law, the national charter, and the laws regulating the work of constitutional bodies. We took measures and decided to pardon thousands of those convicted in political cases and also in cases involving common rights. We scrapped the state security court and dispensed with the idea of having a vice president. All of these measures are designed to produce a political climate conducive to national reconciliation.

Our reform endeavor has not been confined to the political domain. No, we attached special attention to the economic sphere and took measures to activate economic life in the country in a manner that would help develop the investment sector and consequently create jobs for job seekers. We also gave due attention to the poor and underprivileged. Moreover, we gave due attention to the sensitive sectors that are related to the citizen's basic needs and requirements. All this is an embodiment of the transformation plan, which is comprehensive and integrated. Without consecrating and entrenching this plan, the process of national reconciliation would remain vulnerable and weak.

ALIF BA': The statements contained in your recent speech on not legalizing the launching of religious parties was met with much satisfaction on the Tunisian and Arab scenes. We would like to have a more accurate insight into the motives behind this decision of yours and also into the circumstances which caused you to make this decision.

The president: Pluralism is a difficult cultural option. Hence, it requires organization. That is, it must be subject to legal and moral controls. Otherwise, the democratic process would remain vulnerable to failure and retreat.

We are eager to safeguard this new experience in our country to consecrate its traditions in our political life, to allow these traditions to bolster the climate of reconciliation and solidarity, and to strengthen national cohesion which would enable the country to face up to present and future challenges. Likewise, we do not seek to exaggerate matters in this regard to prevent pluralism from becoming an end in itself, as such a fate would distract our attention away from tackling substantial issues and drag us toward further useless outbidding and vituperations.

Our stand on the right to form parties is neither based on a narrow-minded preferential perspective nor on personal whims. No, this stand is based on major principles concerning the following:

—Respect for the law and constitutional legitimacy.

—Pledging allegiance to no party other than the homeland.

—Preventing the monopoly by any party of what all the Tunisians have in common; namely, Tunisia's Arabism and Islamic faith which are enshrined in the first chapter of the Constitution.

—Renunciation of all forms of violence.

—Protecting the gains scored by citizens.

Considering these principles, which are contained in the parties law and which enjoy the support of all the parties that signed the national charter, we do not see any reason for the launching of a religious party that would exercise a monopoly on what all have in common. The Islamic faith is the religion of all Tunisians. It cannot be used in competition for outbidding purposes or as a means to reach power. This stand of ours was not dictated by specific circumstances. No, it emanates from our firm belief in the need not to mix religion with politics, as experience has shown that anarchy emerges and the rule of law and institutions is undermined when such a mixing takes place. [passage omitted]

Democratic Rally Political Bureau Meets

LD2812205589 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] The Political Bureau of the Constitutional Democratic Rally met this morning at the presidential palace in Carthage, under the chairmanship of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, leader of the Rally.

The Political Bureau looked into the activities of the Rally and the preliminary results of its working groups, which are studying the fundamental issues in the national arena. The Political Bureau also reviewed the results of the recently held national conference of the secretary generals of the Rally's societies. Because of the success of this conference, the Political Bureau decided to hold one every 6 months. The Political Bureau looked into the work of the Rally's structures abroad, especially in France, and discussed the situation and preoccupations of our communities abroad.

On the other hand, the Political Bureau expressed its satisfaction with the support for the positive changes witnessed in Romania toward freedom and democracy.

Bahrain

Foreign Minister Receives Iranian Message

JN2812132889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1110 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Manama, 28 Dec (WAKH)—Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah has received a written message from Iranian Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati on current developments in the Gulf.

The message was delivered by Hoseyn Nazaqian [name as published], Iranian charge d'affaires in Bahrain, during his meeting with the Bahraini minister in Manama today.

Kuwait

Chinese President, Delegation Conclude Visit

PRC Official Discusses Talks

LD2512165489 Kuwait KUNA in English 1525 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 25 (KUNA)—Foreign Undersecretary Suleiman Majed al-Shaheen [name as received] met here Monday with his Chinese counterpart Qi Huaiyuan who is accompanying Chinese President Yang Shangkun on his current visit to Kuwait.

The Chinese official told KUWAIT NEWS AGENCY that his talks with Shaheen dealt with bilateral relations and regional and international issues of common interest.

Qi Huaiyuan described his talks with the Kuwaiti officials as very fraternal and said, 'We sensed that the viewpoints are identical and similar concerning many issues discussed.'

Sources of the Foreign Ministry said that the meeting was held within the framework of meetings that are held on the sidelines of the Chinese president's visit to Kuwait, including the joint Chinese-Kuwaiti committee session and the meeting between Chinese officials and the Kuwaiti Fund for Economic Development.

The sources added that the talks tackled several issues of bilateral interest and political and diplomatic cooperation between the Foreign Ministries of both countries.

The Kuwaiti-Chinese economic, trade and investment relations are represented in 12 joint ventures, the value of which is 300 million dollars in addition to six projects that are to be implemented over the next three years, agreements on which have been signed by the Kuwait Fund and the Chinese Government.

The fund also co-finances a development project of a main airport in China with a sum of 25 [word indistinct] dollars.

The meeting was attended by the director of Asia and Africa Department of the Foreign Ministry 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Qadir [name as received], the Chinese ambassador to Kuwait and a number of Foreign Ministry officials.

PRC President Ends Visit

LD2612235189 Kuwait KUNA in English 1101 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Kuwait, Dec 26 (KUNA)—Chinese President Yang Shangkun left Kuwait this afternoon after three days of talks with senior Kuwaiti officials on expanding the relations between the two countries. [passage omitted]

The Chinese leader, who is visiting Kuwait for the first time, headed to Muscat where he will hold talks on similar issues with Omani senior officials.

PDRY

Al-'Attas Sees 'Intensive Work' on Unity

EA2312072189 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Supreme People's Council Presidium, has confirmed that with the signing of the Aden accord on 30 November, intensive work has begun for the two political leaderships to undertake all measures connected with the implementation of this accord.

In an interview with him conducted by SITTAH WA ISHRIN [26 September, North Yemeni newspaper], published in Sanaa today, he said there were a number of questions the two leaderships in the two parts of the homeland were striving to solve. He pointed out that these steps had in effect begun with the unity committees' resumption of their work and completion of their tasks. They include the joint economic and financial committee, which accomplished its work in Sanaa yesterday, and other committees, which should accomplish their tasks within 2 months, in accordance with the Aden accord.

He said the forthcoming period would witness numerous meetings at the level of the Supreme Yemeni Council and the Ministerial Committee, to complete all that had been agreed upon, considering that the time was fixed, and it indeed requires intensive and continual efforts. He said this stage requires almost continual meetings between officials in the two parts, in order to consult, coordinate, and accomplish the various procedural tasks in implementation of the accord, and in order to arrive at the proclamation of the united Yemeni state.

Libya Armed Forces Chief Arrives in Aden

EA2612155289 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Brother Brigadier Abu-Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Armed Forces in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, arrived this evening in Aden on a 1-day visit to the PDRY.

Brother Brig Abu-Bakr Yunis Jabir told ADEN NEWS AGENCY he was carrying a message from Brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution, to his Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, the secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party Central Committee, expressing support for Yemeni unity as confirmed by the will of the two historic political leaderships in Yemen, and concerning matters relating to the Arab world in the light of the latest international developments.

He stressed the Libyan Jamahiriyah would offer its unlimited support for this historical work achieved by the Yemeni people. In conclusion, he expressed pleasure at visiting the southern part of the homeland. He also expressed happiness over efforts of the two political leaderships of Yemen towards achieving Yemeni unity, which would crystallize the hopes of the Yemeni people and the Arab nation.

He was received on arrival at Aden International Airport by Brother Brig Salih Ubayd Ahmad, member of the Political Bureau and minister of defense, a number of commanders from the Armed Forces, and Brother (?Husayn Salih), director of the Libyan People's Bureau in Aden.

Receives Letter From President

LD2712000489 Tripoli JANA in English 1431 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] Aden, al-Kanun [December] 26, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the president of the Supreme People's Council in South Yemen, this morning received Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunis Jabir and delivered to him a letter for the leader of the revolution.

Following the meeting Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunis Jabir said that he conveyed the congratulations of the leader of the revolution and the Libyan Arab people to President Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas for the important unionist historic act realised between the two parts of Yemen. He added that he discussed with president Al-'Attas matters of interest of the Arab world.

He said the realisation of the unity of the two parts of Yemen gives us all the hope for the establishment of total Arab unity which is the hope of the Arab masses from the ocean to the Gulf. [sentence as received]

United Arab Emirates

Reportage on PRC President's Official Visit

Arrives 23 Dec

JN2312145889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1430 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Dec (WAKH)—PRC President Yang Shangkun arrived in Abu Dhabi this afternoon on an official visit to the United Arab Emirates.

His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, headed those who welcomed the Chinese president upon his arrival from Cairo at Abu Dhabi International Airport.

UAE President Hails Ties

JN2312185089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1720 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Dec (WAKH)—His Highness Zayid Bin-Sultan Shaykh Al Nuhayyan has hailed relations of friendship and cooperation with the PRC, emphasizing the interest of the United Arab Emirates [UAE] in further developing them in recognition of China's position as a major power. Speaking during a meeting with visiting PRC President Yang Shangkun, his highness stressed the importance of contacts between world leaders for the advancement of people's interests and the general well-being of the international community, as well as in the interest of bilateral ties.

For his part, the PRC President said he was very much obliged to be meeting with the UAE president, and expressed admiration for the international standing enjoyed by his highness and his influence on regional and international issues. He stressed the priority his country accords to relations with the UAE and its desire to enhance bilateral cooperation.

Round of Talks Conducted

JN2412112589 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0920 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Dec (WAKH)—A round of talks was conducted in Abu Dhabi this morning between His Highness Zayid Bin-Sultan Shaykh Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE]; and PRC President Yang Shangkun.

The round of talks was attended by a number of senior UAE and PRC officials. The talks dealt with bilateral relations in certain spheres and issues of common interest.

The PRC president arrived in Abu Dhabi yesterday on a 2-day visit to the UAE.

'Responsible Source' Reports

JN2412141389 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Dec (WAKH)—A responsible source in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] has said talks between UAE President His Highness Zayid Ibn-Sultan Shaykh Al Nuhayyan and PRC President Yang Shangkun dealt with existing relations between the UAE and the PRC and means of promoting them.

The source added the talks also dealt with current developments, the current relaxation in international relations, and its effect on possible solutions to regional problems.

The source said the two leaders discussed the Middle East situation, efforts under way to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestine question, the situation in the Gulf region, the need to bolster international efforts to realize a lasting peace between Iraq and Iran, and to safeguard the region's security and stability.

The UAE president expressed appreciation for the PRC's stand on peace in the world, and called on the country to make further efforts to achieve peace and stability in the world. He stressed the PRC can do good in the interest of mankind.

Departs for Kuwait

JN2412141589 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1250 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Dec (WAKH)—PRC President Yang Shangkun this afternoon left Abu Dhabi for Kuwait following an official 2-day visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE].

During his visit the PRC president conducted talks with UAE President His Highness Zayid Ibn-Sultan Shaykh Al Nuhayyan, dealing with bilateral relations and means to strengthen them. They also reviewed international and Middle East developments.

Government Welcomes Resumed Syrian-Egyptian Ties

JN2812071689 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 27 Dec (WAKH)—The United Arab Emirates [UAE] has welcomed the restoration of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Syria.

In a statement tonight, Foreign Under Secretary Shaykh Hamdan Ibn-Zayid Al Nuhayyan announced his country's full support for everything that would help rapprochement and cohesion among the Arab countries with a view to achieving effective Arab solidarity. He said this would enable the Arab nation to face up to the challenges and devote efforts to promote common Arab action in service of the nation and its endeavor to achieve progress and prosperity.

Shaykh Hamdan said the UAE, which always acted to bring Arab viewpoints closer, will spare no effort to unite the Arabs and support all positive steps aimed at restoring cohesion among all Arab countries.

Yemen Arab Republic

Salih, Al-Bid Meet, Issue Statements 26 Dec

JN2612144889 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] A brotherly meeting was held at the Presidential Palace in Sanaa this morning between the two sides of the two parts of the Yemeni homeland. The Yemen Arab Republic side was led by Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen side was led by 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party. During the meeting, they reviewed the overall issues of unionist action, what has been achieved since the historic Aden agreement was signed, and ways to speed up the work of the joint unionist committees to meet the schedule in accordance with the historic Aden agreement.

During the meeting, the two sides also stressed the need to reinforce coordination, hold meetings, and exchange visits between official and popular institutions, bodies, and organizations at the current stage of our people's life in order to strengthen efforts to restore the Yemeni unity. The meeting was attended by a number of senior officials in the two parts of Yemen.

Following the meeting, Brother Col 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid spoke to representatives of the mass media of the two parts of the homeland. The brother leader said: In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for this brotherly meeting in the capital of the unity state between the leaders of the two parts—a meeting which crowns the historic Aden agreement on 30 November and which made the masses of our people in the two parts happy.

Now the masses of the two parts are looking forward to the practical steps to implement the historic Aden agreement. During this brotherly meeting, which took place in an atmosphere of love between the two leaders of the two parts, we discussed practical steps to implement the Aden agreement literally. The next few days will also witness the following great steps: The merger of popular organizations, the merger of governorates, and the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the two parts to unite the laws and agreements of the two parts. Our brothers in the executive organs can apply the appropriate legislation and laws of the southern part or the northern part to the unity state. This will help us achieve a merger unity. We have to mobilize all the organs,

popular organizations, bodies, and legislative authorities to overcome these difficulties and bring views close together.

The brother leader stressed that unionist action has entered a serious phase, especially following the historic Aden agreement. He pointed out that this has become a tangible reality and that there will never be any retreat by the two leaders of the two parts. He added: I believe that some still think that this historic agreement will fail, as have previous historic agreements. This will not occur, and all national and political forces in the Yemeni arena should support this step and the political leadership of the two parts of the homeland in order to speed up this process and transfer the agreement onto a better and more comprehensive level.

The brother leader explained that the rights of all political forces and government employees are viewed as acquired rights, and should be guaranteed. He added: Some people may wonder where the officials of the northern part of Yemen will go and where the officials and leadership of the southern part of the homeland will go after state unity is established. However, we can say that responsibility is not a gain. Therefore, we have to achieve this strategic goal.

As we and all political officials in the leaderships of the two parts of Yemen are nationalists, we should sacrifice and achieve unity for the people, who have created these leaderships, and who will also create new leaderships. We should not become a stumbling block. Some people might say that the leadership is a stumbling block. This will not transpire because we represent the will of the people, and we have to meet their expectations and their demand to achieve this strategic unity. Education officials in the southern part of the homeland will be in charge of education in Sanaa; education officials in the northern part will be in charge of education in Sanaa [as heard]; officials in Hadramawt will be in charge of education in al-Hudaydah; and officials in Ta'izz, Sa'dah, [name indistinct], Lahij, and Aden will take part.

In the unity state, participation will expand and many cadres will be employed in the unity state. It is true that expenditures in a state in the north and a state in the south will be reduced. Instead of spending on two institutions or bodies, we will spend on one institution or body. The savings will be channelled toward development. The army will be one army; and the expenses incurred by the security organs and the armies will be used by one army and one security organ in the unity state. We will also increase some spending in the interest of the unity state.

This unity will not be against any side. It is aimed at rearranging the Yemeni home and family, which were divided by colonialism and the imamate. Some forces might benefit from this situation. They may pretend to support the unity and the unity slogans. Now brilliant and false slogans will no longer exist. We all are responsible, and we will all participate in the process. Yemeni unity and the leadership of the two parts and its bodies will represent national unity. It will not be sectarian or regional.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid then said: What has been said by Brother 'Ali expresses our view. However, I have to express my immense happiness at what I have seen in my homeland, Sanaa and Dhamar. Today, we will travel overland to cover that distance between Aden and Sanaa to see our villages, areas, and kinfolk. We have great confidence in the future. I express my deep gratitude in my own name and on behalf of my brothers and your brothers in the southern part of the homeland. This high spirit, these festivities, and the unionist atmosphere will further our advancement toward the Aden agreement, which we all have achieved. The Aden agreement and what we are doing today are a fruit of the struggle of all factions and honorable men of the Yemeni people. We must mention the efforts of the officials of the two halves of Yemen, the efforts of the General People's Congress, and the efforts of the Yemeni Socialist Party. It is certain that every honest individual will support us. This is what we see now. Therefore, we feel that the martyrs of the glorious 26 September and the 14 October revolutions did not fall in vain. Today we reap the fruits of their sacrifices and blood. They struggled greatly, and many fell as martyrs. We are sad because they fell on Yemeni soil.

Italy's Andreotti Concludes Official Visit

Meets With Prime Minister

JN2812111289 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] The first round of talks between our country and the Italian Republic was held in Sanaa last night under the chairmanship of Brother 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, prime minister and Standing Committee member, and Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, who arrived in Sanaa earlier yesterday heading a delegation on a 3-day visit to the Yemen Arab Republic. During the session, subjects related to the promotion of bilateral relations in the various fields and a number of issues of common concern were reviewed.

Before the session, the brother prime minister reviewed with the Italian prime minister the various aspects of cooperation between the two countries and means of promoting them. They also discussed developments on the Arab and international scenes. The meeting and the session of talks were attended by members of the Yemeni and Italian delegations.

Bilateral Relations Discussed

JN2912101789 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] Official talks between our country and Italy concluded in Sanaa last night. Brother 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, prime minister and Standing Committee

member, chaired our country's side, while Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti chaired the Italian side. Members of the two delegations attended.

In the final session, the work of the technical committee, formed in the first session, was reviewed and ways of developing relations were discussed.

The brother prime minister spoke during the meeting and voiced his pleasure and that of members of the Yemeni side at the fruitful talks held during the visit. He said: During these talks, we managed to review bilateral relations, the unity issue, and regional issues, as well as the international issues. I am very pleased with the remarks made by his excellency the Italian prime minister during the first session about increasing bilateral cooperation between the two friendly countries. I am also pleased with his remarks about Yemeni unity, Arab issues—particularly the Palestine question, the Lebanese question, the Gulf question, the international issues. We also register our appreciation for the position of the Italian prime minister and the Italian Government on these issues. I am hopeful and optimistic that cooperation between the two sides will develop in the future.

On his part, the Italian prime minister expressed his thanks for the cordial welcome he was accorded and his satisfaction about this visit, which, he said, was not only constructive because we had identical views on the international political issues, but also because of the commitment made to work together.

The Italian prime minister also expressed satisfaction with the positive outcome of the talks. He emphasized the need to activate cooperation in the industrial field, particularly small industries and vocational training. He noted the Italian contribution and cooperation with our country in the field of antiquities and preserving old Sanaa. Concluding his speech, he stressed the need to cooperate in different fields, particularly in the cultural field.

Prime Minister Receives French Defense Minister

JN2812133089 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Brother 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, prime minister and Standing Committee member, this morning received French Defense Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement. A number of topics were reviewed during the meeting concerning bolstering bilateral relations as well as other issues of common concern.

Foreign Ministry Welcomes Egyptian-Syrian Ties

JN2812210789 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Our country has welcomed the restoration of diplomatic relations between sisterly Egypt and Syria, and expressed great satisfaction with this step, which is a positive development in the march of Arab solidarity, unification of Arab stands, and the rallying of resources and capabilities in the interest of our Arab nation and fateful issues.

A statement was issued by the Foreign Ministry saying that our country blesses this step, which culminates the efforts being exerted to bolster joint Arab action and consolidate Arab cohesion.

Joint Military, Security Panel Convenes

South Yemen Official Arrives

JN2512142089 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Brother Colonel Muhammad Haytham Qasim, Central Committee member and deputy chief of staff in the southern part of the homeland, arrived in Sanaa today, to lead the southern part's delegation to meetings of the military and security committee.

In a statement to SABA', he said he is happy to be in Sanaa to follow up the work of the military and security committee in the two halves of the homeland. Al-Qasim pointed out that the work of the committee is also part of the unionist action according to the historic Aden unionist agreement. The time is now right for firm, practical steps down the road of unity, he said.

The military and security committee for the two halves of the homeland convened this afternoon. Cochairing the session were brothers Colonel 'Ali Muhammad Salah, deputy chief of staff for military affairs and Standing Committee member, and Colonel Haytham Muhammad Qasim, deputy chief of staff in the southern half.

Addressed by Chief of Staff

JN2612164089 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] Brother Colonel 'Abdallah Husayn al-Bashiri, chief of staff and member of the Standing Committee, received at the Armed Forces Officers Club today the chairman and members of the joint military and security committee for the two parts of the homeland, which is holding its first session for 1989 in the capital of united Yemen, Sanaa. The chief of staff conveyed to them brother leader Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's greetings and good wishes for the committee's success in its deliberations. He noted that the committee's meetings are being held while Sanaa is hosting the meeting of Brothers 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and 'Ali Salim al-Bid, emphasizing the proper atmosphere and the excellent and suitable climate that will help the committee carry out its tasks.

The chief of staff said: The committee's meetings at this stage differ from its previous meetings because today's meetings are characterized by frankness, honesty, and sincerity in the interest of the Yemeni homeland and people. The chief of staff referred to the first meeting of

the joint military and security committee, which followed the signing of the historic Aden agreement. This demonstrates that the Armed Forces and security forces were in the forefront in efforts to carry out this agreement, proving to our Yemeni people that they are being served and that they are the honest guardians of their interests. The chief of staff noted that military and security meetings will continue in this direction between the two parts of the homeland on both official and popular levels to change all the misconceptions that had prevailed in the past.

Concluding his speech, the chief of staff wished the committee success in its work.

Joint Education, Culture Panel Meets in Sanaa

Received by Prime Minister

JN2312155989 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Brother 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, prime minister and Standing Committee member, received at noon today brother members of the Education, Culture, and Information Committee headed by brothers Hasan Ahmad al-Lawzi, minister of information and culture and Standing Committee member, and Dr Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum, member of the Central Committee and minister of culture and information in the southern part of our homeland. At the outset of the meeting, the brother prime minister and member of the Standing Committee delivered a speech in which he welcomed the brother members of the joint committee. He said: I am very pleased to have you all among us, indicating that the tasks to be considered by the committee have never been so conspicuous, especially after the historic Aden agreement between the two leaderships.

The prime minister added: What is required of the committee is to complete its tasks and prepare for the day on which the state of unity will be proclaimed. Many of the brother members of the committee have followed up on its tasks ever since its formation. Hard work begins from this period, because tasks on how to approach the practical application should be defined with a view to the day on which the unity will be proclaimed. There will be no obstacles related to its work.

The brother prime minister said: I am glad that part of the committee's work has been achieved. Now we have to work for the unification of the regulations and the way of implementing them with respect to the information and educational effort. We are still following up on that. What remains is to lay down a concept for the unification of these information and education organs. I believe that everyone is aware of these fields' importance to the unionist cause, especially since they are the two ministries that deal with the mind, thought, culture, and education.

The brother prime minister said: In fact, I am pleased that there is full understanding and awareness concerning this point. Everyone on the committee shares this same perspective. Regarding the educational issue, we have now overcome all obstacles and are concentrating on basics that concern the new generation for which we have shouldered a great responsibility. It will be the task of the state of unity to decide how the march of education will be like in the state of unity.

Concluding, the brother prime minister said: We bless your meeting and wish you success.

Brother Dr Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum, member of the Central Committee and minister of culture and information in the southern part of the homeland, delivered a speech in which he thanked the brother prime minister who patronized the committee's 10th session. He said: The directives of the two political leaderships in the two parts and the attention by the brother prime ministers in the two parts provide incentives for us to work in light of the historic Aden agreement. This will be for the sake of complementing the tasks of the committee and discussing aspects so as to develop its work. Jarhum added that upon reviewing the committee's work, we can say we have achieved good results and managed to reach views on how the information and education organs and institutions will work.

The brother minister of culture and information in the southern part said: Through our work, we have succeeded in realizing the joint brotherly and vital spirit during the discussion of all issues that the committee considered. We hope that the results will be rendered fruitful in the public interest of the homeland.

Concluding, he said: We found the required understanding from all committee members. We hope we have succeeded in achieving what is aspired for by the political leadership in the two parts, and whatever the Yemeni people want for the sake of realizing their unity and progress.

Committee Concludes Session

JN2612183489 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Excerpts] The Education, Culture, and Information Committee in the two parts of the homeland today concluded its 10th session under the chairmanship of Hasan Ahmad al-Lawzi, minister of information and culture and Standing Committee member, and Dr Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum, Central Committee member and culture and information minister in the southern part of the homeland. The committee discussed and approved the tasks in the field of antiquities and historical sites in the unity state, as well as the direction of information work in 1990. [passage omitted]

The committee also approved the trends of cultural and educational work for 1990 in an effort to begin uniting

the cultural and educational bodies during the transitional phase, establish joint administrative councils for research and other fields, and hold joint educational rallies in both parts of the homeland. [passage omitted]

Minutes Signed 27 Dec

JN2712131289 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Text] Brothers Hasan Ahmad al-Lawzi, minister of information and culture and member of the Standing Committee in the Yemen Arab Republic, and Dr Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum, Central Committee member and head of the Education, Culture, and Information Committee in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, signed the concluding minutes of the Education, Culture, and Information Committee which contained the results of the 10th session which recorded an achievement for all the tasks of the regional committee.

The two ministers also signed the document of basic trends for informational unity work, as well as the document for basic trends for cultural and educational work in 1990.

The signing ceremony was attended by the brothers, sisters, and members of the education, culture, and information committee.

They also approved publishing all the signed documents in the two parts of the homeland and printing all major documents constituting the file of the committee's work.

It has been decided that the committee will hold its 11th session in the second week of Janauary, 1990, in a final round during which it will discuss and approve the comprehensive Yemeni national education projects which have been set in accordance with the comprehensive Arab education project document and the tenders on Yemeni educational work.

The brothers and members of the Education, Culture, and Information Committee headed by Dr Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum, Central Committee member and minister of education and culture, left Sanaa today after participating in the meetings of the committee which concluded yesterday in the capital of the unity state. He was seen off by Brother Hasan Ahmad al-Lawzi, minister of information and culture and Standing Committee member, and the members of the Education, Culture, and Information Committee.

Yemeni Justice Ministers Leave Sanaa for Aden

JN2312210889 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Brother 'Abd-al-Wasi' Salim, minister of justice and religious trusts in the southern part of the homeland and head of the Yemeni Borders Committee, left Sanaa for Aden today at the end of the committee's first session held in Sanaa, the capital of the state of unity. In a statement to SABA', Brother Salim explained that the committee reviewed a number of tasks it has been charged with by the political leaderships of the two parts. [passage omitted]

Concluding, he indicated that the committee established its work plan for the upcoming phase and formed a number of specialized working teams to carry out the tasks relating to the committee's work. [passage omitted]

In another development, Minister of Justice Brother Muhsin Muhammad al-'Ulufi left Sanaa for Aden this morning at the head of the northern part's delegation to the Joint Legislative and Judicial Committee for the two parts of the homeland, which will begin its work in Aden tomorrow, Sunday. In a statement to SABA', the brother minister indicated that during the committee's meetings, the tasks assigned at this stage will be completed and the unification of judicial legislations and justice organs will be discussed.

Concluding, the minister noted that he will meet with brother officials in the Ministry of Justice and in public prosecution in the southern part of the homeland to establish a basis for bolstering the unification steps between the judicial organs, which will play an effective role in consolidating the pillars of justice in the state of unity.

Expelled East Jerusalem Mayor Arrives on Visit

JN2512134889 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Brother Rawhi al-Khatib, [expelled] mayor of [East] Jerusalem, arrived in Sanaa today on a several-day visit to our country.

In a statement to SABA', Brother al-Khatib said he is happy to be visiting our country, noting that he will be holding talks with brother officials at the mayoralty of the capital to reinforce cooperation between the historic cities of Sanaa and Jerusalem. He hailed the unionist moves under way in the Yemeni arena embodied by the histroic Aden agreement and the signing of the unity draft constitution.

ACC Trade, Economy Ministers Meet Ramadan

JN2412151989 Baghdad INA in English 1240 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 24, INA—Mr. Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council, Iraq's first deputy premier met this morning with ministers of trade, economy and supply in the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC).

During the meeting the execution of the economic cooperation agreement, signed by ACC countries, to expand and organize trade exchange among ACC countries were discussed.

Mr. Ramadan stressed the importance of such meetings for promoting and strengthening brotherly ties and relations among ACC member states to serve the Arab nation's interest.

The meeting was attended by ACC Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Hisham Tawfiq.

Confer With Hammadi

JN2412163689 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1530 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Dec (INA)—Sa'dun Hammadi, Revolution Command Council member and deputy prime minister, today met with ministers of economy, trade, and supply of Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] member states.

During the meeting they discussed ACC member states' activities in economic fields and implementation of the economic cooperation agreement signed by the ACC member states.

The meeting was attended by Hisham Hasan Tawfiq, ACC assistant secretary general.

Ramadan Returns From Joint Committee Meeting

JN2812171589 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1610 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister, returned to Baghdad today following a 2-day visit to Jordan, during which he led the Iraqi side to the meetings of the higher Iraqi-Jordanian joint committee. [passage omitted]

Ibrahim Receives Afghan Envoy, Message to Saddam

JN2512122489 Baghdad INA in English 1040 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 24, INA—President Saddam Husayn received a written message from President of Afganistan Muhammad Najibullah.

The message was received on behalf of President Husayn by Mr. 'Izzat Ibrahim vice-chairman of the Revolution Command Council during a meeting with Mr Abdul Rashed Wathiq [name as received] who presented his credentials as Afghanistan's ambassador to Iraq.

Present at the meeting was Mr Tariq 'Aziz deputy premier and foreign minister.

Government Source Says Romanian Events 'Internal'

JN2812201489 Baghdad INA in English 1800 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad Dec 29, INA—An Iraqi Foreign Ministry Source said that Iraq considers what had taken place in Romania as an internal event concerning the Romanian people.

In reply to a question by the Iraqi news agency on recognizing the new government in Romanian the source said that Iraq recognizes states and not governments and that Iraq is keen on continuing the relations of friendship and cooperation with Romania and would normally deal with the new government. Iraq is keen on carrying on ties of friendship and cooperation with this government and wishes for the Romania people progress and success, he concluded.

Minister Opens Islamic News Agency Conference

JN2812122589 Baghdad INA in English 1115 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 28, INA—Mr Latif Nusayif Jasim minister of information and culture opened this morning the 14th conference of the Executive Council of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA).

Mr Jasim gave a speech in the conference confirming the importance of the information role played by IINA in disseminating principles of the Islamic religion and following up activities of the Islamic organizations.

Mr Jasim added that the revolution in the field of communications and information necessitated double responsibility for developing this agency by supporting it with all available means to enable it to perform its duties and keeping pace with the explosion in the field of communications and contacts through the extensive networks of communications in the international news agencies.

Mr Jasim further added that presence of the agency in its straight status and in fields which should not use religion for political covers was a necessary, important and vital issue because there were certain parties trying to exploit religion for political purposes under void pretexts.

The minister gave example in this regard saying that Iran had held a conference to study the human rights in Islam while it detained more than 70,000 Iraqi prisoners of war and tourtured them.

INA, Niger News Agency Directors Confer

JN2412152189 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 24, INA—Mr. 'Adnan al-Juburi, director general of IRAQI NEWS AGENCY INA met here this morning Mr. Amado Osman [name as received] director general of Niger's news agency

During the meeting, scopes of cooperation between the two news agencies in the field of exchanging expertise, news and press data were discussed.

Mr. Osman had arrived here last night to take part in meetings of the executive council of the INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC NEWS AGENCY IINA opening here on Thursday.

Reportage on Reaction to Egyptian-Syrian Ties

Ministry Spokesman Responds

TA2812173389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Israel hopes that the resumption of ties between Egypt and Syria will enable Egypt to use its influence on Syria to abandon the path of war and adopt a policy of peace. The Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Israel has noted the Egyptian president's announcement that the resumption of ties with Syria will not harm Cairo's relations with any other country. Israel will, of course, continue to follow closely developments in the Arab world and their influence on Israel and the chances for peace in the Middle East, the spokesman said.

Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres told our political correspondent Arye Golan that Israel should welcome the resumption of ties between Cairo and Damascus. We should not forget, Minister Peres said, that they were renewed even though Egypt remains committed to peace with Israel.

Shamir: No 'Winds of Change'

TA2812201189 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said a short time ago that Syria is continuing its preparations for the day it will be able to wage war against Israel. The prime minister said we should not be overly influenced by the enormous changes taking place in East Europe. The winds of change are not blowing in our region, the prime minister said, referring to the accord renewing diplomatic relations between Egypt and Syria. Our political parties correspondent Hanan 'Azran provides us with an excerpt of the prime minister's remarks made in Bet Jabotinsky in Tel Aviv:

[Begin Shamir recording] There is a lot of talk about the resumption of normal relations between Egypt and Syria. There are those who want to forget what the previous Egypt-Syria combination meant for us some some years ago. It is true that extremist Syria is acquiescing to Egypt's commitment to Camp David. On the other hand, we must not forget that Syria is not changing one iota in terms of its attitude toward Israel. We cannot find in its actions or announcements any tendency whatsoever to moderate its policy toward the State of Israel. The hostility continues, as do the preparations for the day war appears feasible to them. We must not celebrate prematurely. [end recording]

[Correspondent Yig'al Goren] Those are the prime minister's remarks, but it is important to point out that differing opinions also were voiced in Jerusalem today. Political circles in Jerusalem and Foreign Ministry experts called the resumption of Egyptian-Syrian ties the most important landmark in the Middle East: This is the first time since the peace accord was signed 10 years ago that such an important Arab leader as Al-Asad has been prepared to shake hands with the Camp David side. This is a political about-face that has far-reaching potential, the experts say, considering Egypt might now become a very important channel for contacts between Israel and Syria. Such a channel has not existed up until now.

President Mubarak's status also has grown higher, since the Arab rejectionist front against Egypt has now been totally smashed. It also will have repercussions on his status among the Palestinians. The experts believe that Mubarak will now become even more committed to a solution of the Palestinian problem by means of an agreement with Israel. The United States now also will consider him the most important element in the Middle East.

The new Egyptian-Syrian ties strengthen the opinions of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] intelligence experts, which were made known to Cabinet ministers. These opinions hold that a new era of moderation has begun in the Arab world and that there is now an awareness that conflicts have to be settled through negotiations, not by military force.

These evaluations were also conveyed by senior Egyptian diplomats to their Israeli colleagues. These developments might explain the appeal made today by Eliyahu Ben-Elisar, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, to the Egyptian president to intervene with President al-Asad to arrange a meeting with Prime Minister Shamir at any location he chooses.

Further on Shamir's Remarks

TA2912055689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Report by Le'a Zinder]

[Text] Commenting on the newly restored ties between Syria and Egypt, Prime Minister Shamir said last night: Let us not forget what this pair has cost us in the past; let us not celebrate prematurely.

In a brief interview afterwards, the prime minister explained his attitude to the Syrian-Egyptian reconciliation.

[Begin recording] [Shamir] Well, generally it is a positive step, but in spite of it I say that it is well known that Syria has not changed its position toward Israel, its attitude toward Israel. Therefore, we have to still be ready to face any danger.

[Zinder] When you speak of Syria's attitude, you mean Syria's desire to go to war with Israel.

[Shamir] Yes, of course.

[Zinder] The Cabinet secretary came back from the United States, and it seems he did not receive the assurances that the Israeli Government wanted. Does this mean, in your view, that the meeting of the foreign ministers in Washington will not take place in January as planned?

[Shamir] I would not say that. I do not know when it will take place, but the meeting is not yet prepared sufficiently, and before it will take place, it will be necessary further talks and negotiations. [sentence as heard] [end recording]

Shamir sounded a warning to those, especially Israelis, who believe that Israel will eventually be persuaded to negotiate with the PLO. Our greatest danger, he said, is those who serve the enemy from within. Anyone who thinks we will talk to 'Arafat's gang of murderers is deceiving himself, he thundered. We will not budge.

In what appeared to some observers as a veiled threat to the Labor Party, Shamir said: The model of Tabah will not repeat itself. He said that the Likud had opposed arbitration on the dispute over Tabah, but had found itself standing alone against the United States, Egypt, and the Labor Party. We did not call for new elections at that time, but if a similar situation develops, we will go to the people.

Peres Details Position

TA2912061789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres believes that the rapprochement between Egypt and Syria constitutes a positive development because it comes against the background of Egypt's adherence to the peace agreement with Israel.

[Begin Peres recording] The important question to ask is: What was the basis for this renewal of relations? Mubarak did not receive Al-Asad; it was Al-Asad who received Mubarak. Up until now Syria had refused to renew relations with Egypt, declaring that there was nothing to talk about as long as Egypt remained faithful to the Camp David accords and upheld them. Well, now Syria has accepted Egypt's conditions even though the Israeli flag is flying in Cairo. The renewed relations between Syria and Egypt were not caused only by regional factors; they are the result of a great change which is sweeping the entire world as well as the Middle East. This change is just at its beginning, and everything shows that this is just the hors d'oeuvres of a huge change, whose full menu is being exhibited before us daily in a historical sense. The developments that occurred in Eastern Europe will eventually also take place in the Middle East. [end recording]

Commentator Assesses Situation

JN2812181689 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1435 GMT 28 Dec 89

["Observation" by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] Dear listeners: The joint official statement issued in both Cairo and Damascus announcing their decision to resume full diplomatic ties has not come as a surprise. No, this statement was preceded by numerous strong and unmistakable signs and indicators that made it perfectly clear during the past few months and weeks that Syria had become acutely and seriously interested in a reconciliation with Egypt and was heading in that direction. What is clear is that this development was not brought about as a result of a change in Egypt's principled policies. No, this development was made possible because of an unmistakable change in Syria's policies. Throughout the years of estrangement with Egypt, Al-Asad's Syria remained committed to the idea that it would opt for reconciliation with Egypt only when Egypt abrogated the peace treaty with Israel.

Egypt, however, during the rule of both Al-Sadat and Mubarak, displayed honor and nobility, committing itself to its principled stands. Egypt, under Al-Sadat and Mubarak, has continued to espouse peace with Israel as a firm, strategic option out of a conviction and belief that this peace policy would serve the higher interests of not only the Egyptian people, but also those of all Arab peoples.

Hence, the change in this regard is to be found in Damascus. And here, arises the following question: What are the actual and real motives and factors that prompted the Damascus rulers to get rid of their clownish behavior, climb down from the high tree that has been their abode for so long, and walk the path conducive to a reconciliation with Egypt? For the past few months, Damascus and its news media have persistently strived to prepare the grounds for this move by loudly singing the tune of Arab solidarity. The Damascus news media have attempted to portray the move as one fully dictated by the need to achieve Arab solidarity. Moreover, these news media have gone so far as to insinuate that the reconciliation with Egypt has become a pressing requirement for Arab solidarity.

However, it goes for sure that the Damascus rulers have not discovered the advantages of Arab solidarity only at present or that they have forgotten about it over the past 12 years. Anyway, the Syrian motives in this regard are well known. Some of these motives will be mentioned below. First, Syria under Al-Asad, which has been plagued with chronic economic and internal problems, not to mention its deep involvement and embroilment in the Lebanese quagmire, has been needing Egypt very badly for a long time. In fact, Syria needs Egypt much more than Egypt needs it, particularly after the rest of the Arab states officially normalized ties with Egypt. The second and perhaps the more pressing motive concerns the suffocating isolation that has long been plaguing Syria in the Arab arena. This isolation has gone so far that Syria is unable to find itself in any of the three regional Arab groupings made up of 15 states. These regional groups are the following: the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Maghreb Union, and the Arab Cooperation Council.

Some observers find two other motives behind Syria's decision to effect a reconciliation with Egypt. The first of these two motives pertains to the Damascus rulers' desire to weaken the alliance or rather the strong ties existing between Egypt and Iraq. The second motive concerns the awareness of Syria under Al-Asad of its

deteriorating situation and leverage within the framework of the Soviets' strategy on the Middle East in particular and on world politics in general due to the growing understanding and detente existing between the two superpowers. At any rate, those who love peace cannot but hope that the return of Al-Asad's Syria to Egypt's lap will prove to be a sincere desire designed to serve genuine Arab solidarity and the peace desired by the people of our region, and not a tactical and opportunistic step that might be followed by Syria falling back on old habits and clownish behavior.

Knesset Members Meet With 'Arafat in Tunisia

TA2812201789 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Knesset Members 'Abd-al-Wahab Darawshah and Muhammad Mi'ari visited Tunis 2 weeks ago without publicity and met with Yasir 'Arafat and other senior PLO leaders. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari says that in response to a question this evening, Darawshah said: No comment. He added that he was doing his utmost to close the gaps between the positions of the PLO and the State of Israel to help arrange an Israeli-Palestinian meeting in Cairo.

Tomorrow's issue of the weekly AL-SINARA, which is published in Nazareth, quotes a similar response from Mi'ari.

Public figures from the territories and other Palestinian communities also participated in the Tunis meeting. They discussed various ideas and an attempt to find more flexible formulas in dealing with the PLO's demand to appoint members of the Palestinian delegation. Mi'ari and Darawshah arrived in Tunis from Paris.

Source on Intifadah Expense, 'Costlier' Victory

TA2912103689 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 29 Dec 89 p 1

[Report by Joshua Brilliant]

[Excerpt] Tel Aviv—Israel's casualties in a future all-out war will be higher than anticipated now, unless the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is fully reimbursed for the cost of fighting the intifada, a senior military source said last night.

Addressing defence reporters here, the source said the IDF had spent NIS [new Israeli shekels] 519 million on fighting the intifada by the end of 1988. He expected this year's costs to amount to NIS 419 m. and reckoned the IDF would need NIS 430 m. in the next fiscal year.

The Treasury had undertaken to compensate the IDF only partially. Thus, next year the army expects to get only NIS 150 m. of "intifada money" or one-third of the anticipated costs.

Altogether, from December 1987 when the intifada began to the end of fiscal 1990, the IDF will be short NIS 900 m. which had been earmarked for defence and spent on fighting the Palestinian uprising.

The "intifada money" is needed to purchase bullets used against Palestinian rioters, to construct detention centres, to feed the thousands of inmates and to provide them with tents and blankets.

The source warned that if the Treasury does not reimburse the IDF, the army will have to scale down its preparations for a future war.

[Writing on the same subject, Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT on 29 December in a report by army affairs correspondent Dani Sade on pages 1 and 6 adds that "the new work plan to be prepared in January will be based on the cancellation of procurement projects, including, most probably, the Navy submarines construction." The report quotes the remarks of "a senior military element" on the cancellation of the submarines project: "The army is currently unable to make long-range commitments. It should also be remembered that although the submarines project is important to the Navy, it is not one that would determine the outcome of a war."]

He argued the army could put off repairing a runway or training a battalion, and it could use materiel in its stockpiles. However, that cannot go on indefinitely, he said. If it does not develop new weapons systems, train units and replenish the stores, it will still win the war, he said, but victory will be much costlier. Such a situation would also reduce Israel's bargaining position in subsequent negotiations, he said. [passage omitted]

Iraqi Leaflet Criticizes Intifadah Leadership

TA2512093889 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 25 Dec 89 p 2

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] The Iraqi Ba'th Party has sharply criticized the Unified National Command of the Intifadah. This is the first such attack against the command from secular nationalist elements.

The leaflet, which has been disseminated in the West Bank, maintains that the Unified National Command of the Intifadah has failed to play a leading role, thereby causing a deep schism among the Palestinians in the territories. So much so, in fact, that no local committee observes the command's orders. Furthermore, the leaflet says, there is hardly any place in which a local committee representing the intifadah has been established.

The leaflet also reprimands the Bayt Sahur merchants for the way they handled the tax revolt, arguing that they were subjected to double pressure—from Israel and from Palestinian isolationist circles that did not take the intifadah's best interests into consideration, thinking only about the specific faction they represented.

The masked individuals' modus operandi also comes under fire. It is argued that "factional" circles terrorize

the local population, with the intifadah leadership unable to protect it. While this is in itself a positive phenomenon, says the leaflet, the way it is being executed sets the masked people apart from the general populace, making it easy for Israel to capture them.

AL-FAJR Views 'Jordan's Move to Democracy'

TA2512130989 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 25 Dec 89 p 4

[Editorial: "Popular Demands Set the Current Stage"]

[Text] The Jordanian Government announced this week the end of its 22-year-old state of martial law, gradually shifting life in Jordan toward democracy and liberalization. This was evident last week when, for the first time in many years, Palestinians and Jordanians held protest marches and other political activities without the intervention of the army.

Of course, there is a lot Jordan still needs to do in order to ensure the complete introduction of democracy and the protection of human, civil and political rights, and we are confident that Jordan will take all the necessary measures to secure the proper practice of democratic life.

What happens in Jordan obviously interests us. Jordan has the largest population of Palestinians in diaspora. Almost every family in Palestine has one or more relatives in Jordan. In addition, Jordan's move to democracy dispels Israel's claims that it is the only "democracy" in the Middle East. It will also help block Israeli hardliners' efforts to pass off the "Jordan is Palestine" notion. The hardliners were hoping that instability and ethnic differences in Jordan would create trouble for the present regime and lead some disgruntled Palestinian to carry out a coup to overthrow the monarchy, thus turning the country into real anarchy and chaos. But now, with democratic procedures, disgruntled people will be able to air their views freely and through peaceful means. This will ensure that stability and security will prevail.

Jordan is not the only Arab country to shift to a more liberal life and allow freedom of political expression. Arab regimes now seem to be more relaxed about allowing freedom, mainly because intra-Arab differences are minimal and relations between the Arab countries are improving. Also, international detente and the introduction of perestroika and glasnost in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are helping ease international tension and resolve regional conflicts.

It is a happy feeling to see regional and international conflicts coming to an end. This promises a better future and a better world for everyone. The people have said their word on world issues and they have come out winners. Jordan's shift to democracy was due to popular demand following the April protests, which brought down the government of Zayd al-Rifa'i and forced the regime to call free eletions and return to parliamentary life. Similar popular movements in Eastern Europe have forced the regimes there to introduce liberalization.

Likewise, the Palestinian popular Intifada in the occupied territories has changed the movement of history in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and is forcing world governments to address the Palestinian people's complaints very openly. Israel will have no choice but to yield to popular pressure, just like all other regimes in the world are yielding to popular pressure for a change.

Democracy in Jordan is bound to reflect positively on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. We hope to see real democracy in every Arab country and eventually in an independent Palestinian state.

Reportage on Demonstration, March in Amman 28 Dec

Dispersed; No Injuries

JN2912071789 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 29 Dec 89 pp 1, 12

[Text] Amman—PETRA—An Interior Ministry responsible source last night stated that after the audience left the inauguration of an art exhibition last night at the Royal Cultural Center in Amman, approximately 3,000 citizens assembled near the center. Afterward, 400 of them staged a march without prior permission from competent authorities.

At the beginning, the march headed in an organized manner toward Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir square, accompanied by Public Security men. When they reached the square, a number of participants began to attack passing cars and Public Security vehicles. The security men thus were forced to intervene to maintain public order.

The march was dispersed without any casualties or material losses, except the windows of some civilian and Public Security vehicles were broken.

Regretting such violations at the current stage being experienced by the country, and the failure to shoulder responsibility dictated by democracy, the Interior Ministry urges citizens to abide fully by order and warns it will take legal measures against anyone who tries to disrupt order or harm the course of democracy.

Followed 'Palestinian Festival'

JN2912111989 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1030 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] The latest reports from the Jordanian capital, Amman, indicate the large, unlicensed demonstration dispersed last night by Jordanian security forces assembled after a song festival conducted by the Palestinian band Baladna [Homeland] at the al-Husayn Youth Center. Eyewitnesses said during the festival, emotional and zealous Palestinian nationalist songs were sung, after which hundreds of those who attended the festival took to the streets. When the march reached the Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir square in Amman, some threw stones at cars and the Interior Ministry building. Jordanian riot police intervened to disperse demonstrators to maintain public order, as stated by a Jordanian Interior Ministry official.

Syria's Move Toward Egypt Hoped Not 'Tactical'

JN2912092189 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 29 Dec 89 p 16

["Every Day" column by Tariq Masarwah: "On Arab Relations"]

[Text] We very much are interested in the return of Egyptian-Syrian and Egyptian-Libyan ties to their normal status. These inter-Arab relations no longer tolerate theoretical ideologies and isolation. Disagreements should be subject to the principle of modifying stands instead of attacking others' positions, accusing them of treason, or boycotting them because of these stands. Moreover, no Arab regime is capable of toppling another by merely launching media campaigns against it.

We are very interested in seeing Egyptian-Syrian relations contribute to relaxing or improving Iraqi-Syrian relations, in view of the Arab weight Iraq and Syria have in forming an effective strategy against the expansionist Zionist aggression, whose arrogance and ferocity in the occupied territories, and Lebanon in particular, have not been reduced by peace with Egypt or by the peace the Palestinians are offering.

Let us try to deal here with the restoration of Egyptian-Syrian relations with some frankness, and say: We hope the Syrian move is not a tactical one.

Despite its ideological principles, Syrian politics under certain circumstances can be pragmatic in their orientation, because its aim is another political objective.

We do not understand fully the causes of these long Syrian cycles of avoiding normal relations with Iraq, although circumstances more than once have been proper to establish such relations. To take the Syrian principles into consideration, Iraq is almost the closest to it. If we take the same principles into consideration, we cannot understand why Syria disagrees with Iraq.

Let us again try to deal with the restoration of Egyptian-Syrian relations with some frankness, and say: Should not the basis that dictated to Damascus its new stand on Cairo be applicable to its stand on the PLO and its leadership—Yasir 'Arafat in particular? Is it acceptable for Damascus newspapers and radio to continue to talk about the "'Arafatist capitulation' and "'Arafatist deviation?"

Following the same argument, we do not understand fully the causes of the prolonged rupture with the PLO and this stand on the Palestinian situation, especially in Lebanon. Is it reasonable that Amal and Hizballah with their sectarian structure are closer to Damascus than the PLO?

With our love for Damascus, we want to see matters plainly. We welcome the restoration of Egyptian-Syrian relations, and hope to see relations with others go back to normal. No matter what happens, Damascus remains the beating heart of Arabism.

Jordanian-Iraqi Committee Concludes Meetings

JN2812153489 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Meetings of the higher Jordanian-Iraqi joint committee concluded today. The meetings were chaired by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council

member and first deputy prime minister. Badran and Ramadan today signed the minutes of the meetings. The minutes of the fifth session of the joint committee set the volume of trade between the two countries for next year at $800 million. They also provide for continued use of al-'Aqabah port for the export and import of Iraqi commodities and to give it priority according to economic bases. The higher committee stressed competent authorities in both countries will complete the required basic steps for consolidating economic integration. This especially concerns joining the two countries' power grids to link the eastern and western parts of the homeland, as well as transportation integration and studying the possiblity of linking the two countries with a railway.

The two sides studied followup reports presented by the joint Jordanian-Iraqi ministerial committee. Both sides expressed full satisfaction with the development of bilateral relations and the high level reached by them. The two sides also were acquainted with minutes of the 10th session of the ministerial committee conducted in Amman 25-27 December, which cover economic, trade, agricultural, energy, industrial, transportation, communications, financial, health, and contracting cooperation. The recommendations included in the minutes were approved.

After signing the minutes of the session, Taha Yasin Ramadan delivered a speech in which he declared the dialogue was one among a single team, and that an initiative is required to reach the best formula for bilateral cooperation. Ramadan affirmed the importance of the excellent performance noted during the past years in terms of serious work and coordination. He said his happiness over the meeting's spirit was greater even than that over the volume of material cooperation in various fields.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran afterward delivered a speech in which he said: I have not felt at any time we are two teams, but that we are one, looking forward to further cohesion and cooperation between the two countries led by two inspired leaders: His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and His Majesty King Husayn. He said: Both leaders have broad aspirations. God willing, we will be up to the aspirations of the two leaders and peoples, to proceed with firm and wise steps in full sincerity, responsibility, and faithfulness.

Ramadan, Committee Meet King

JN2812171089 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1445 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Amman, 28 Dec (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn this afternoon at al-Nadwah Palace received Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister, and members of the Iraqi delegation to the higher Jordanian-Iraqi joint committee.

The meeting was attended by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan; Prime Minister Mudar Badran; 'Adnan Abu-'Awadah, political adviser to his majesty the king; Salim Masa'idah, deputy prime minister and interior minister; Marwan al-Qasim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and members of the Jordanian side to the higher Jordanian-Iraqi joint committee.

Ramadan conveyed to His Majesty King Husayn greetings of president Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi people.

The heads of the Jordanian and Iraqi sides briefed his majesty on the results of the higher committee's work and its orientation toward expanding and promoting bilateral cooperation in various fields.

In his capacity as chairman of the Ministerial Council of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], Taha Yasin Ramadan presented the council's program and steps taken on the march of joint action and integration among the ACC states—a program that will be submitted to the forthcoming February ACC summit in Amman.

His Majesty King Husayn expressed satisfaction with and pleasure at the steps taken and results achieved by the higher committee.

The meeting's participants had lunch at His Majesty King Husayn's table.

Ramadan Departs

JN2812171389 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1448 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Amman, 28 Dec (PETRA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Iraqi Revolution Command Council and first deputy prime minister, left Amman this afternoon following a 2-day official visit, during which he met with His Majesty King Husayn. He also chaired the Iraqi side to the meetings of the higher Jordanian-Iraqi joint committee. [passage omitted]

Media Cooperation Protocol Signed With China

JN2812174389 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] The Jordanian Radio and Television Corporation and Chinese radio and television today in Amman signed a protocol for cooperation in the television and radio field. According to the 2-year protocol, the two sides will exchange culture, sports, arts, national day, music, children's, and other radio and television programs. The protocol also provides for reciprocal radio and television delegations in tourism, the exchange of expertise, and news coverage. This is in addition to possible coordination and cooperation by the radio and television federations with which the two sides are affiliated. Nie Dajiang, PRC vice minister of radio, cinema, and television, said signing this protocol can bolster friendship between our countries. He said since the diplomatic relations were established between Jordan and the PRC, the ties of friendship have undergone continuous progress. He said this protocol strongly boosts bilateral cooperation in this field.

Amal-Hizballah Clashes, Meetings Continue

NC2812132589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] The situation remains very tense in Iqlim al-Tuffah amid sporadic clashes between Amal and Hizballah. The fighting torpedoed a cease-fire declared by Iran's First Deputy Foreign Minister Besharati which was supposed to take effect at 2200 last night.

Amal Movement sources reported that at 1130 today, Hizballah fighters launched a surprise attack on Kafr Milki. According to Amal Movement sources, the assault was repulsed and heavy losses inflicted on the attackers. Other security sources said fighting resumed at 0940. They said that at 1030 both parties dueled with artillery and that shells fell beyond the combat lines in the outskirts of al-Zahrani and al-Nabatiyah. In the past 24 hours, two people have been killed and 7 others injured.

Further on Fighting

NC2812144889 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] According to the most recent security reports from the South, clashes involving the use of medium-caliber machineguns, RPG's, and mortars are currently raging between the Amal Movement and Hizballah along the combat lines of Jarju', Kafr Fila, Kafr Milki, 'Ayn Qana, and Buslayya hill. Medical and security sources have reported that the fighting has so far left 50 people dead and 200 others wounded.

The two sides have accused each other of violating the cease-fire agreement.

No Cease-Fire Before Withdrawal

NC2812181489 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Excerpt] The situation in Iqlim al-Tuffah entered a new stage today. The clashes continued and the number of those killed rose to 55 with more than 180 others injured.

Amal Movement leader Nabih Birri addressed the movement's fighters and said that the fighting will continue even if another 200 persons are killed. Holding a machinegun, Minister Birri added: There will be no cease-fire until Hizballah fighters withdraw from all the areas they occupied in the past 6 days.

A Hizballah source said that its fighters will not withdraw before the start of direct talks between the two sides.

Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, the Iranian deputy foreign minister, has stressed the need for the return of all the fighters to their former positions.

The attacks and shelling between the two sides on the Jarju', Jba', Kafr Milki, 'Ayn Qana, and 'Ayn Bu-Siwar combat lines have not stopped despite the announcement of a cease-fire at 2200 yesterday.

Clashes involving tanks and mortars resumed intermittently this morning on the same combat lines, particularly on the Kafr Milki, Jarju', 'Arab Salim, and 'Ayn Qana lines. A shaky calm prevailed in the afternoon. The villages of al-Zahrani, Sarba, Humin al-Fawqa, Rumin, and Zifta on the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah were affected by the shelling. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Said Disguising Actions

NC2812184889 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] A responsible information source in the Amal Movement has made a statement on the situation in Iqlim al-Tuffah. The source accused Hizballah of continuing its deceptive information campaign to disguise its war against the South and its inhabitants. The source declared that Hizballah continues to attack the movement's positions there.

In his statement, the source said that Hizballah's acts under the slogan of safeguarding the resistance are only meant to slaughter the resistance and displace its masses. The source emphasized that the Hizballah groups are bringing in military hardware via the areas controlled by the enemy and its agents in Kafr Huna and other areas in order to kill the sons of the South and destroy all life there.

The source stressed that the movement will defend the South, its people, and its right to decide for itself with all its strength, because the movement's objective is to keep the South a living cause and an arena for resistance rather than one-upmanship.

Groups Meet on Cease-Fire

LD2912193489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] Representatives of the Revolutionary Movement of Hizballah and the Amal Movement of Lebanon, at a meeting with the deputy foreign minister of our country, paid tribute to the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while stressing their adherence to the declared cease-fire. They further expressed the wish that the black chapter of recent clashes will be closed forever, and that all obstacles may be removed through the endeavors of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to an IRNA report, Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, who is currently in Beirut to resolve the quarrels between the revolutionary movement of Hizballah and the Amal Movement, in his meetings with Lebanese religious and political personalities yesterday, once again stressed the stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran in relation to condemnation of any kind of violence between Islamic groups. He further sought the resolution of conflicts through peaceful ways.

Meanwhile, relative calm has been established since the early hours of last evening in all parts of Iqlim al-Tuffah.

LCP's George Hawi on Response to Israeli Raid

NC2812133589 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Today thousands of Lebanese in Beirut bid farewell to the martyrs of the Lebanese Communist Party [LCP]. [passage omitted]

LCP Secretary General George Hawi declared that the party had taken a series of measures and made a number of decisions in response to the Israeli act of aggression. Foremost among these is to declare an alert on responding inside occupied Palestine alongside the Palestinian resistance heroes.

Speaking during the funeral of the LCP party officials who were martyred during the Israeli raid against the party Central Committee headquarters in al-Rumaylah, Hawi said the party has decided first to close all bureaus, keeping only one liaison office open in each province. He said: We are not a canton, a camp, a region, or an office, but part of this people, who will protect us. Hawi added: So far our operations have been confined to those against the Israeli soldiers on our territories, which is our right and is right. However, the enemy has shifted the battle toward hitting civilian headquarters, and [Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhag] Rabin has threatened to continue the aggressions against us and other forces. This compels us to mobilize all our capabilities to strike inside occupied Palestine alongside resistance heroes. Our comrades will join the Palestinian organizations to fight at their side on the land of Palestine, he added.

The third decision Hawi announced is to respond to Israel's agents in Lebanon. He said since the Zionist officials have made a connection between their act of aggression and the LCP's role in the popular and political struggle against the occupation, [South Lebanese Army Commander] Lahd, and 'Awn, we confirm the soundness of this link and add that our strugglers will punish those working for Israel.

Hawi added that this reply is not sufficient. A more comprehensive and feasible answer would be a unified stand by all the nationalist forces allied with Syria, the Palestinian and Iranian revolutions, and international allies. [passage omitted]

CPSU Sends Condolences, Support to LCP

NC2812153389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Delegations bringing condolences continued to visit the Lebanese Communist Party [LCP] headquarters in Beirut. Among the visitors today was Soviet Ambassador to Lebanon Vasiliy Kolotusha, who conveyed a cable from the CPSU Central Committee to LCP Secretary General George Hawi.

The cable strongly condemned the Israeli attack on the LCP headquarters, which will add to tension in the south and hamper the Lebanese internal solution.

The cable affirmed the Soviet Union's support for the al-Ta'if accord and the legitimate Lebanese authorities. It expressed solidarity with the Lebanese Nationalists' struggle against the aggression to remove the Israeli occupation of the Lebanese territories.

The cable offered the Soviet Communist Party's condolences to the LCP and the families of the martyrs who fell in these attacks.

Cabinet Decisions Include Customs at Sil'ata

NC2912084389 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] With the advent of the new year, President Ilyas al- Hirawi is expected to move to Beirut and to ask the cabinet to remain in constant session to enable the legitimate Lebanese authority to stabilize its state of affairs and achieve its goal of regaining its usurped institutions.

Meanwhile, it has been reiterated that during its recent meeting in Ablah, the cabinet adopted a number of measures that it did not announce at the time. These measures include opening the door to recruitment in the Lebanese Army. The army command will issue a detailed communique on this in a few days. Another measure calls for discussing the strengthening of naval control over Lebanese shores in accordance with the Arab tripartite committee's decision. The decision provides for control over importing arms for the disputing parties in Lebanon.

It has been learned that the government is studying the revival of the naval control room and requesting urgent military aid from the fraternal and friendly states to enable it to carry out its task in the required manner. In addition to this, it will start collecting customs duty on goods imported via the sea, confining the collection of this duty to the port of Sil'ata in the north. This means that customs duty on all goods imported by sea to any part of Lebanon shall be collected in Sil'ata before the goods are unloaded in any other port; otherwise they will be regarded as smuggled goods. This measure will solve some of the problems of dealing with newly created ports on the Lebanese shores, and it can provide a solution to the problem of the continued control of Beirut port by illegitimate bodies. All states will be officially notified of this measure through diplomatic channels so that they will abide by the instructions to pay duty at Sil'ata port before having the ships proceed to any other port on the Lebanese coast.

Finance Minister dr 'Ali al-Khalil will hold an expanded meeting on Monday or Tuesday to put the final touches on this decision before putting it into effect.

Ja'ja' Emphasizes Christians' Respect for Others

NC2912080789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] Lebanese Forces Commander Dr Samir Ja'ja' has asserted that no Lebanese group can have a future in isolation from other groups. He stressed that Christians cannot exist, survive, or enjoy peace unless other Lebanese groups can enjoy the same privileges.

During a luncheon hosted for war victims, Dr Ja'ja' stressed that the first condition for resolving the Lebanese issue is for all Lebanese groups to recognize and respect each other. He emphasized that the solution of the problem is not just a slogan. A solution must begin by seeing reality as it is and accepting it; this is what we are doing, he said.

He affirmed that the Lebanese will not tolerate a return to the situation prevailing before 1943. He promised to keep up the struggle until reaching a suitable formula which does not make us a landless people without dignity, sovereignty, freedom, or independence.

Dr Ja'ja' said: Some accuse us of sectarianism. If sectarianism means representing Christians alone, this is a reality and not a charge. No man can claim to represent all and defend all. He added: We have to be realistic, because representing Christians does not mean that we are against the others. On the contrary, if we represent Christians, we have to safeguard the interests, future, security, and well-being of all Lebanese sects alike.

Dr Ja'ja' continued: We have a common future and destiny. Let no one try to be predominant over others or force something on them. No Christian can force a certain ruling system on a Muslim. Similarly, no Muslim can force a certain ruling or educational system on a Christian.

Dr Ja'ja' concluded: We will never be ashamed of our identity or our representation because we do not deceive ourselves. We frankly say that we represent the Christians in Lebanon, and we have to try to expand our representation day after day. However, he said, this does not mean that we antagonize others. We have to pay attention to the interests and the ambitions of all other groups alike.

Ja'ja' News Conference After Meeting With 'Awn

NC2412151489 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 24 Dec 89

[News conference held by Lebanese Forces Commander Samir Ja'ja' with unidentified reporters following a 2 and 1/2-hour meeting with General Michel 'Awn at B'abda Palace on 24 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Ja'ja'] We began by discussing the internal situation. We didn't begin by reviewing the Romanian crisis or what is happening in Panama. Naturally, we began with the internal situation. With regard to the internal situation, I am surprised how some little things can be misinterpreted, given a political dimension, and blown out of proportion.

There is no doubt that there are two large institutions, each with its own history and its own way of dealing with matters. As you know, some elements or officials in the Lebanese Forces would tell you that we have been involved in this issue for 15 years. We have been fighting on the fronts. There is nowhere we did not fight, work, and sacrifice. When we were confronting Syria, where were all these people? We were the ones who worked. Elements or officers in the Army would tell you that they were shackled by political decisions in the past, but now they are free. They say this is the way to confront Syria, look how we are confronting it, this is the only way to do it, and so on. They are here together. We must not take them lightly. When we want to raise an issue realistically, we must not take it lightly. We are not ignoring problems. No, no. We are not saying there is no problem and that everything is fine. No. There is an atmosphere that can lead to the spreading of rumors when the situation becomes aggravated or when events escalate.

Therefore, it is necessary, in the final analysis, to have constant meetings among the leaders to put everything into its proper perspective. The Lebanese Forces has members. No one is ignoring the Lebanese Forces' good contribution, struggle, and work for the country. No one thinks that it has stopped working. Nor does anyone ignore the fact that the Army was paralyzed as a result of political decisions and that, if given the chance, it will display its valor in the face of the Syrians or any other enemy.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Ja'ja'] One moment. There is no division in ranks. Let me be very, very clear on this point. As you know, I will not say anything for which I will not take responsibility. There is no division, and such a division would be impossible. It is possible, however, that we might disagree on some political matters. One thinks the confrontation should originate from above, one thinks the confrontation should originate from the side, one thinks it should originate somewhere else. This is possible. But division in the ranks inside the free areas is impossible.

Therefore, I do not want anyone to be afraid. I am a responsible man, and I say to you: I want everyone, including the army troops and the Lebanese Forces, to celebrate the holiday. It is my task and the task of Gen 'Awn to remain alert. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Dr Ja'ja', your statements recently have concentrated on the unity of the Christian ranks and the solidarity of the Army and the Lebanese Forces on the fronts. The people want to hear from you a clear position on the al-Ta'if agreement.

[Ja'ja'] Be patient, Miss, the issue is much larger, more serious, and more comprehensive than the question of the al-Ta'if agreement. Let us not try...[changes thought]

Listen, if you try to outwit me, I will try to outwit you, and I have a militia. [laughter] Therefore...[changes thought] yes, you have a militia, our militia. For whom is this militia? It is for you, for all the people. At any rate, the militia is no longer a militia. It has grown and become an institution.

[Reporter] Dr Ja'ja', I have...

[Ja'ja] No, let me finish. Let us not try to outwit each other. The question is much bigger than this. The question is how to tackle the existing situation. This is what is being raised, and this is what we discussed today. I said that we talked about the internal situation. Half of the meeting was devoted to the internal situation. We looked for ways to normalize the situation. The other half was devoted to discussing the general situation. The general situation, Miss, is more delicate than the question of who supports and who opposes the al-Ta'if agreement. It is more delicate, more serious, and more significant than this. The second half of the meeting was actually devoted to discussing ways to deal with the existing situation. This is what is being discussed now. There are many developments and events which we must daily take into consideration so that we can draw up a successful plan or perhaps more than one plan. To deal with a situation like the one we are facing, perhaps we need 500 plans. Perhaps we need to take a new fact into consideration and to draw up a new plan every day.

[Reporter] Dr Ja'ja', I have a question about strategy for you. Is there a clear plan for a united political concept at the Christian and Lebanese levels?

[Ja'ja'] Let me say something. Your question is on target as it allows me to explain the internal situation in detail. We must get used to the idea of not being idealistic, but being pragmatic. The more pragmatic and reasonable we are, the more problems we can overcome. [passage omitted]

We must realize that we are not Switzerland. We are here in Lebanon, at the heart of the Middle East, where many of the region's conflicts are being waged on our territory. Do you know how many factors are involved in Lebanon—from the Syrians, to the Palestinians, the Iranians, the Israelis, and some other 5,000 factors? First, we must not be surprised at this situation. More resistance movements emerged in countries where the situation was less serious than emerged in Lebanon. Thus it is natural to have diverse (?views) in society, but the important thing is not to let this diversity lead to conflict. This is the essence of meetings such as today's and of all that took place in the past. There are no conflicts, but there is diversity. We are drawing up plans for the day-to-day handling of the general situation. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] How would you describe the current situation?

[Ja'ja'] I consider the situation now to be good. I believe that, in the wake of the events of the past 2 months, the military threat has at least been frozen. But there is no doubt that political efforts abroad, which are not taking the Lebanese realities into consideration, are still inadequate. Hence, I can say that the military threat is frozen, but there is large-scale political action taking place abroad which needs attention. From now on and in such circumstances, we must deal with the crisis on a day-to-day basis. You see what happens and then deal with it. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] At the start of your statement, you spoke of two establishments, a united front, and a single enemy. The people are worried. How do you explain this worry?

[Ja'ja'] [Passage omitted] It is natural for the people to be concerned, particularly whenever there are incidents, as there are two establishments and two forces. There are also many enemies, media organs, and foreign parties which are trying to foster and exaggerate these sensitivities. They are trying to weaken the ranks so as to be able to implement what they are contemplating. We must behave responsibly. We must act calmly and not be taken in by rumors. We must get used to the idea of recognizing and appreciating each other. No one should belittle the position of others or ignore them. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Dr Ja'ja', did you invite Gen 'Awn to attend the resistance day celebrations?

[Ja'ja'] Gen 'Awn does not need an invitation. Every day is resistance day. Every house in the eastern area is his house. He is no stranger to the Military Council [the Lebanese Forces' headquarters]. He has been there before and will certainly be there again.

'Awn Congratulates Romanian Front on Victory

NC2812132189 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn, in his capacity as foreign minister, sent a cable today to Ion Iliescu, chairman of the Romanian National Salvation Front, congratulating him on introducing democracy into Romania.

The cable says: In the name of the Lebanese Government and people, we congratulate the National Salvation Front under your leadership on the victory of the Romanian people's will, their liberation from the dictatorial regime under which they have suffered for years, and the restoration of the free democratic system.

The Lebanese Government sympathizes with the Romanian people in their sufferings, which are similar to the sufferings of the Lebanese people themselves, who are eager to restore freedom and democracy and to free their land from all foreign forces.

E. Beirut Parties Favor Parliamentary Elections

NC2312111089 (Clandestine) The Lebanese Radio in Arabic 0600 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] The parties and democratic forces in the free areas [under Michel 'Awn's control] have announced thier support for the principle of holding parliamentary elections and asked the Lebanese Government [of Michel 'Awn] to prepare a popular and media campaign prior to these elections.

Junblatt Comments on Al-Huss Trip, Current Events

NC2212162489 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Walid Junblatt, Progressive Socialist Party leader, [PSP] made a statement today on current developments. He said: Perhaps the topics on the agenda for the so-called Arab-European dialogue are very important. However, I believe that interest in the daily affairs of citizens in the areas under the Ablah government's control are more important. He added: If the trip to Paris [by Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss] is to exonerate Fu'ad al-Turk [Lebanese ambassador to Paris], it is shameful. If the trip is for meeting with hostile personalities or trends, it is serious; and if the trip to Paris is to evade responsibilities for improving services for citizens in Beirut, the mountain, the South, 'Akkar, or al-Biqa', the government had better resign. This would be better. [passage omitted]

Junblatt said: Certain developments have taken place in Panama, regardless of what certain countries opposed to the U.S. military intervention maintain. We declare to those far and near that we support the U.S. military intervention to eradicate the germ, Noriega. I will not elaborate further. This is the stand of Walid Junblatt and the PSP. He added: It is time for Ceausescu to leave the Romanian people alone and to give them freedom in order to avert further bloodshed and tragedies.

Army Commander Lahhud Visits Druze Brigade

NC2212203089 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Army Commander General Emile Lahhud has stated that our efforts are focused on unifying the Army, whose unity represents the basis for the unity of Lebanon.

During a visit to the Hammana Barracks [of the mainly-Druze 11th Brigade of the Lebanese Army] today, he stressed that the issue is far-reaching; it is not the issue of one person against another but is one of ending the country's partition.

He noted that 95 percent of the officers and soldiers of the Lebanese Army in the eastern area are in continuous touch with him.

Resistance Claims Attack on Israeli Vehicle

NC2712143689 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Text] The Lebanese Resistance Front said in a statement today that one of its groups detonated an explosive charge as an Israeli vehicle was passing on the Tayr Harfa-Shama' road at dawn today. The blast put the vehicle out of commission and killed or wounded all the vehicle's passengers. Agent Lahd's radio admitted the operation, but, as usual, failed to report the losses.

The Front's statement added that the Israeli forces arrested a number of citizens shortly after the operation.

Soldier Interrogated About Mu'awwad Assassination

NC2212201989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] After a visit to Zgharta today, Public Prosecutor Judge Joseph Frayhah disclosed that a Lebanese soldier is currently under interrogation in the north in connection with investigations into the assassination of the late president, Rene Mu'awwad.

AFP has cited sources close to Mu'awwad's family as saying that the soldier was arrested on 18 November in Ihdin. The same sources said that guards found an anti-tank mine in the soldier's possession that he had intended to use in an attack against President Mu'awwad. The same sources added that the soldier admitted that a Lebanese officer had used him for the attempted attack and that his commander had been interrogated. The commander was later released as there were no grounds for pressing charges against him.

Sa'adah Returns From France 28 Dec

NC2812182289 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] The Voice of Lebanon correspondent has reported that Phalangist Party leader Dr George Sa'adah returned to Lebanon from Paris tonight. He added that large crowds received him in his hometown of Shibtin.

Yunus Jabir Gives Qadhdhafi Message to Al-Asad

JN2812130089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1030 today Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunus Jabir, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Defense Affairs, and his accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, and 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Ursali, head of the Libyan Liaison Bureau in Damascus.

Col Abu-Bakr Yunus Jabir conveyed to the president a message from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution in Libya. Conversation during the meeting revolved around the Arab situation and bilateral issues.

Leaves Damascus

JN2812210389 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunus Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces, and his delegation this afternoon left Damascus International Airport. He was seen off by General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief, deputy prime minister, and defense minister; the director of the Libyan Relations Bureau [as heard] in Damascus; and the bureau staff.

Foreign Minister Returns From Algeria, Libya

JN2712200789 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1845 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus, 27 Dec (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus this evening after delivering two messages from President Hafiz al-Asad to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, and Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid.

Al-Shar' left Algiers airport this afternoon. He was seen off by Algerian Foreign Minister Sayed Ahmed Ghazali, ranking Foreign Ministry officials, Syrian Ambassador to Algiers 'Abd-al-Jabbar al-Dahhak, and the embassy staff.

Restored Egyptian Ties Basis for Arab Resurgence

JN2812161089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: There only are a few days left before the world says goodbye to 1989 and welcomes the new year with hope and optimism. The outgoing year has witnessed major changes in many countries around the world; strong currents emerged to reinforce the spirit of peace and worldwide cooperation based on justice, human rights, and self-determination. Such welcome changes have been seen by the international community as foundations for a better future for mankind. The volatile situation in the Middle East, though, has remained unchanged: Israel has not budged an inch from its belligerent policies. Indeed, Israel has made a point of seeing out the year 1989 with a string of barbaric raids on the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples and has escalated its repressive measures in the occupied Arab land, as though this region is immune to history and change and thus entitles the Zionist usurpers to fly in the face of all international norms and principles, violate all conventions, and commit all kinds of crimes, unchallenged by human rights advocates.

There only are a few days left before 1989 ends. The barriers between East and West European nations are coming down. But the Arabs, who are endowed with common bonds of kinship, history, language, and shared fortune and aspirations, remain bedeviled by divisions, contradictions, and disarray in the face of the Zionist enemy. One only can be dismayed at the Arab decline when the Arabs have at their disposal enormous resources and potential, which ought to secure them an impressive military and economic weight to deter not only Israel, but its supporters as well. Under no circumstances will Israel be able to take on a united Arab military machine. Given a united Arab front, Israel will have no choice but to recognize Arab rights. Furthermore, properly deployed Arab investments should turn the greater Arab homeland into a paradise and help realize food security for all Arabs. Unfortunately, however, rather than being invested in the Arab world, Arab capital is deployed in the West, when Sudan, for instance, has enough arable land to meet Arab requirements for cereal and other foods. Yet sister Sudan is reeling from famine and poverty.

It is worthwhile for Arabs to do some soul-searching by looking back at 1989 and previous years. They will conclude they need to pursue policies of self-reliance and solidarity, build an indigenous economic and military deterrent force, and attain general strategic parity. Only through solidarity, pooled resources, and a coherent strategy will the Arabs solve their problems—above all, the existential struggle with the Zionists. As long as the Arabs remain disunited and allow their marginal differences to overshadow common interests, the world will continue to pay no attention and limit itself to expressions of regret or condemnation vis-a-vis Israel's crimes, instead of applying any effective pressure on the Zionist enemy.

Revival and consolidation of Arab solidarity now are a matter of life and death for the Arabs. To promote this objective, Syria has sounded the alarm against a Zionist onslaught that should be confronted by a united Arab stand. It is within this framework one can understand the Syrian and Egyptian efforts to rectify the course of their relations and take off from there toward an effective Arab stand, considering Syria and Egypt constitute the core of any Arab action. Anti-Arab efforts in the past have crashed on the rock of their cooperation. Their present and future cooperation lays solid foundations for a comprehensive Arab resurgence. The decision to reestablish ties between the two sisterly states in the wake of

the Egyptian prime minister's visit to Syria has fulfilled their interests and satisfied a pressing popular Arab demand. The proposed meeting between Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak is bound to lay the groundwork for mobilizing Arab resources in a solid Arab front.

Paper Hails Restoration of Syria-Egypt Ties

JN2912070089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Dec 89

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-THAWRAH comments on the restoration of Syrian-Egyptian ties, which have taken on a new dimension. The newspaper says: The developments taking place in today's world and the alliances witnessed on the international arena among countries and peoples which have no common ground except mutual interest must prompt Arab countries to reconsider the ways and means by which the Arab nation's causes have been treated. Arab countries also must find advanced formulas that correspond to the spirit of the age and the horizons of the future awaiting Arabs to gather their resources, strengthen their national and pan-Arab positions, and improve Arab development work that will benefit the Arab nation from the Gulf to the [Atlantic] Ocean.

The paper adds: Although these developments and concepts apply to all Arab states, they constitute axioms when it comes to Syria and Egypt, in view of the nature of relations between the two countries witnessed in old and contemporary history.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that with the restoration of Syrian-Egyptian ties, the people in the two countries in particular, and the Arab people in general, have taken a step on the road to restoring glory to the Arab nation, which the colonialist plots were about to mar, and to bring back to the Arab homeland its pan-Arab unionist brightness, which intense political events were about to distort.

The paper concludes its commentary by saying: We would not be exaggerating if we said the Arab generation's national and pan-Arab sentiments now have been renewed by the restoration of normal ties between Syria and Egypt. In the past, cohesion between Syria and Egypt added glorious pages of victory to history; their future cohesion also will achieve the same on all levels.

Prime Minister al-Zu'bi Speaks at Party Meeting

JN2912090189 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Excerpts] The council of the Damascus Branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] this evening concluded its yearly session of meetings. The council sent a cable of greetings, love, appreciation, and admiration to the militant comrade, Hafiz al-Asad, the Al-Ba'th Party's secretary general and president of the republic. [passage omitted]

The council conducted its yearly meetings at the 7 April Hall. The meetings were attended by comrades Mahmud al-Zu'bi, member of the ASBP Regional Command and Syria's prime minister; Sa'id Hammadi, member of the ASBP Regional Command and head of the Regional Youth and Sports bureaus; Mari Haddad, member of the Party Control and Inspection Committee; and the ASBP Damascus Branch Command secretary and members. [passage omitted]

Comrade Mahmud al-Zu'bi spoke at the meetings and confirmed the party's and country's political principles, which were consolidated with the start of the Corrective Movement. The movement was led by militant leader Hafiz al-Asad and is based on belief in the masses' role and ability to shoulder pan-Arab responsibilities and offer boundless sacrifices for their dignity, freedom, and pan-Arab goals.

Comrade al-Zu'bi also talked about the importance of effective Arab solidarity to face contemporary challenges on political, economic, cultural, and scientific levels. The prime minister referred to our country's firm position in fraternal Lebanon and its constant preparedness to support Lebanese legitimacy with all means to spread its control over every inch in Lebanon.

Comrade al-Zu'bi condemned the practices of the fascist Saddam regime and its support for 'Awn's Zionized clique in Lebanon. He also condemned the Iraqi regime's statements calling for fragmenting Lebanon and consolidating the sectarian diseases infecting it.

Regarding Syrian-Egyptian ties, Comrade al-Zu'bi asserted that the two countries' agreement was, and always will be—in the past, present, and future—for the benefit of Arab dignity, pride, and invincibility.

Comrade al-Zu'bi talked about Syria's economic situation and referred to our economy's strength and ability to overcome all obstacles. He emphasized the role played by the three sectors—public, mixed, and private—and the importance of competition to provide the best services for the masses, methods to consolidate the economic base in the country, and to intensify services that will positively affect the broad masses' living conditions.

Comrade al-Zu'bi also referred to the importance of self-reliance and the need to find national alternatives in economic development. He also referred to the agricultural question, since it constitutes the main link in the national economy chain, and asserted that all requirements for agriculture—such as equipment, expertise, trained manpower, fertilizers, seeds, and so forth—are provided to render success to, and improve agriculture.

Concluding his speech, Al-Zu'bi hoped all comrades will rise to the level of militant President Hafiz al-Asad's exemplary practices. President Al-Asad is considered a pan-Arab and party example in struggle and sacrifice to achieve our people's objectives in liberating and regaining the Arab nation's rights and building the united socialist society.

At the end of the meeting, members of the ASBP Damascus Branch Council approved reports submitted by the branch's command.

Al-Zu'bi Receives USSR's Katushev, Delegation

JN2912093589 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus—Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi this evening received Konstantin Katushev, USSR minister of foreign economic relations, and his accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by Dr Muhammad al-'Imadi, minister of economy and foreign trade; Dr Sabah Baqjaji, minister of state for planning affairs; and Aleksandr Zotov, the Soviet ambassador in Damascus.

At the beginning of the meeting Katushev conveyed greetings from Comrade Ryzkhov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, to Prime Minister al-Zu'bi, who in turn asked the Soviet official to convey his greetings to Ryzkhov.

The meeting focused on Syrian-Soviet cooperation in all economic and trade fields and improving that cooperation to benefit the mutual interest of the two friendly countries.

The prime minister also was briefed on the outcome of meetings conducted by the Soviet minister and his delegation in Damascus on issues related to developing economic and trade relations. He emphasized the importance of these issues in consolidating strong cooperation.

Relations of strong and ever-developing friendly ties between Syria and the Soviet Union in all fields also was stressed.

Defense Minister Pledges Support for Lebanon

JN2712184289 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Under the patronage of President Hafiz al-Asad, commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, celebrations this morning marked the graduation of a new class of officers at the political and military college.

Deputizing for the president in patronizing this celebration was General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief, deputy prime minister, and defense minister. [passage omitted]

Gen Mustafa Talas, the commander in chief's representative, delivered a speech, which he began by conveying the president's congratulations to the graduates and his wishes for their success in performing their duties after having received various types of political, ideological, and scientific knowledge, which gives them a sound basis for realizing party and political action within the Armed Forces. [passage omitted]

The general explained in his speech the sensitive circumstances of the current Arab-Zionist struggle because of the Zionist enemy's refusal to recognize and submit to our legitimate rights. This is all because of those who are chasing after capitulationist settlements and their fake slogans, and in light of the bloody events this struggle created in the Lebanese arena, from which Lebanon still suffers.

The general stated our Armed Forces, which have defended the fraternal Lebanese people, will spare no effort to support Lebanon, remove it from its tribulation, and back Lebanese legitimacy, national decision, and the aspirations of its people for unity and liberating their south from Zionist occupation.

The general also noted Lebanon's problem is on its way to solution, despite all Iraq's tyrant and Israel are providing for the mutinous officer 'Awn in support and backing to keep sedition alive, hamper the progress of national accord, and keep the doors open to partitionist schemes in favor of the Zionist plots. The general said those betting on partitioning Lebanon are deluding themselves.

Concluding his speech, the general sent the loftiest expressions of pride and loyalty to struggler President Hafiz al-Asad on behalf of our valiant forces. He reaffirmed the pledge of loyalty to the tumultuous march, so our Arab nation's goals of unity, freedom, and socialism will materialize. [passage omitted]

Lebanon Has Right To Confront 'Partitionists'

JN2912073789 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Dec 89

[From the press review]

[Text] In a commentary titled, "The World Has Strengthened Lebanese Legitimacy and Isolated the Partitionists," AL-BA'TH says: Day after day, Lebanese legitimacy consolidates itself on the international, Arab, and Lebanese levels. Every day, the partitionists' isolation becomes more evident. It also has been confirmed to all Lebanese people that Michel 'Awn, the reserve general in the Zionist pocket, only represents a phenomenon threatening Lebanon and its future. With its decision to condemn the insurgency of 'Awn and his clique, the UN Security Council has given the people of Lebanon, the Arab nation, and the whole world the right to confront the wrongdoers who made Lebanon a killing field to appease the Zionist wish, which corresponds to 'Awn's partitionist plans.

The paper says: This is more proof that 'Awn and his supporters have followed a dangerous course, which one cannot ignore.

AL-BA'TH says: If Michel 'Awn was reassured by the Zionist air raids and found in the Lebanese people's blood a way to implement what Zionism has charged him with, we tell that general Lebanon will remain single and united. We also tell him the blood of its people, shed by 'Awn himself or by the Zionist-Nazi aggression, will be the sign and evidence for all Lebanese people to adopt the necessary position.

The paper asserts: Lebanese legitimacy's international credibility and the mass Arab and Lebanese support to that legitimacy have given Lebanon the full responsibility to defend its unity and cohesion among its citizens.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Sends Message to Romania's Iliescu

LD2812175189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, President of Afghanistan, sent a congratulatory message to Bucharest addressed to His Excellency Ion Iliescu on the occasion of his appointment to the post of the chairman of the Council of the Romanian National Salvation Front. In the message, whole-hearted congratulations were expressed and assurance stated that the people of Romania, under the leadership of the Council of the National Salvation Front, will be successful in overcoming the difficult and responsible tasks of the present stage to ensure peace, justice, democracy, and progress in the various fields of social, political, and economic life. Wishes were also expressed for further expansion of the friendly ties and cooperation between both countries' people and governments.

According to another report, Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers of Afghanistan, sent a congratulatory message to Bucharest addressed to His Excellency Petre Roman on the occasion of his appointment as prime minister of the Socialist Republic of Romania.

Najibullah Speech to Koh-e Daman Figures

LD2612001889 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Speech by President Najibullah to dignitaries from Koh-e Daman; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed elders and representatives of Koh-e Daman; dear friends. This is the third time that I am meeting you. As far as such meetings and consultation become useful to the people of the region and convey the message of goodwill and understanding, dialogue, talks and ending war, they will bring me pleasure no matter how many times they occur.

I met with the representatives of the people of the north in Saratan [month beginning 22 June] when a number of you were also present. We discussed a number of views then. I asked you to use all your power and means to explain to your children and relatives who are in the ranks of the opposition to refrain from the continuation of war and bloodshed—to refrain from those actions the result of which has a direct effect on the people of the north, people of Kabul, and a number of other provinces.

Since that time 5 months has elapsed. New facts have come to surface. The people understand more the nature of peace and reconciliation and value it. The people have a good understanding of the formations as well as of the policy of the state, the state of the Republic of Afghanistan. The people understand with every day who is in favor of peace and who is in favor of the continuation of war and bloodshed. I want to present a report to you.

Everyone used to say that the war is continuing in Afghanistan because the Soviet forces have come to Afghanistan; if these troops leave Afghanistan, the war will end. I ask you a question sincerely. It has been a year since the soviet troops left Afghanistan. Why hasn't the war ended? I have said before and want to mention again that before the revolution succeeded in Afganistan, and before the arrival of the limited Soviet troops in Afghanistan—in 1353 [year beginning 21 March 1974], when the Daud Khan regime ended its 1st year—Gulbuddin, Rabbani, and a number of their close colleagues went to Pakistan. They formed their armed groups in Pakistan, and the next year—that was 1354—they came to some regions of the country. I remind you, they embarked on a series of incidents in Laghman, Panjsher, Sorkh Rud, and in Paktika.

If someone asks why such incidents occur, I am sure you know the situation. At that time, there was no revolution, there were no Soviet troops. Why do they form the so-called guerrilla groups and create a series of disorders in some regions of the country? The main reason behind the issue has been the conspiracy of the enemy of Afghanistan. [Word indistinct] to bring in Afghanistan disorder, fighting, house to house fighting, and bloodshed.

You can see for yourself that before the revolution, too, there were fighting incidents in our country as a result of interference and aggression by Pakistan where they supported a number of the elements. Now we assess the revolution and arrival of the Soviets. A year has passed since the Soviet troops went back to their country. However, the war is still continuing. I request from you, I know you understand these issues, please convey it to your brothers, to your friends, to your children, to your relatives who are in the ranks of the opposition [words indistinct]. Let us come and discuss the key issue. The key issue is that Pakistan is hostile to Afghanistan. It has been 44 years since Pakistan was established on the map. During these 44 years it fought three times with India and was defeated all three times. During its third war with India it lost a part of its territory under Bangladesh. It was unable to fight India, and a complex was created for Pakistan as a result of these wars, for it lost a part of its territory. Now does it want to compensate with the cost of our nation and our people and Afghanistan? It might be that because of these defeats it wants to compensate by conspiracies and plots in Afghanistan. In order to foil these conspiracies and plots and to prevent interference and aggression, for the sake of ending war and bloodshed in our country [words indistinct], we agreed to remove this pretext and said let us discharge the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. To meet this end, it was necessary for us to sign an international accord. We concluded the Geneva accords which had been launched before, very quickly. We committed ourselves under this accord to withdraw the foreign forces from our country. And they committed themselves to not using the territory of Pakistan by the armed opposition and armed groups against Afghanistan. They will remove from Pakistan their offices, their training centers, their depots,

their weapons centers and their camps. I do not want to conceal from you, I want to mention to you with honesty, that we sat with each other and decided to implement with sincerity our commitment that the foreign forces should leave our country. We expected that the other side would also implement its commitment in practice.

We thought if they leave Pakistan, where should they go—such a number of refugees, organizations, groups? Here, the PDPA, the Republic of Afghanistan declared the policy of national reconciliation so that we Afghans embrace one another and reconcile. And we reached this conclusion that it is time for truthfulness and to embrace the other side. Henceforth, we will forget all that has happened. So where should we accommodate them? We decided to evacuate a number of border areas for them. You remember that we withdrew from Chamkani, we withdrew from Jaji, we withdrew from the province of Konar, we withdrew from the province of Paktika, we withdrew from the border areas of the surroundings of Zabol and Qandahar provinces, and we declared all those areas demilitarized. Although Soviet units were here, we did that so that they could come to the territory of Afghanistan, to their own country, and be settled. Then we would resolve our problems through talk and negotiation and goodwill among ourselves. If they blamed us, we would accept and compensate it, and if they were to blame, we would not ask them for compensation. Only fratricide and war should cease. But they presumed that act of goodwill of ours was weakness. They thought that we were defeated while the Soviet Union was still with us. They claimed that they captured five provinces from us and that when all Soviet forces had withdrawn, God bless, in 3-4 days all provinces and in a week Kabul would be occupied.

We showed our goodwill by that welcome—that when you came to Afghanistan if you wanted to be in the form of parties—the law of political parties has been declared and you could freely conduct activities. If you wanted to take part in the government, we declared the formation of a coalition government, saying let us sit at talks and reach an understanding how and in which form to set up this government. If you said that you did not want to talk with us and want government for yourselves—okay, we will declare elections. We will draft and approve an election law and hold elections. It is the right of the people of Afghanistan to elect anyone they want. To anyone they surrendered the position we will concede it [as heard]: Both elections for the Presidency and the Milli Shura. National government will be formed by the Milli Shura. Anyone who has the majority will form the government. If they could not win the majority some parties would come together—as is the tradition in other countries—they make a majority and form a coalition government. Whichever way they opt for. But they said no, we seize power by force. I tell you as a faithful and believing Muslim that I believe in this holy verse of the Koran which reads: He gives honor if he wishes and he humiliates if he wishes; good is in his hand and God has power over all things.

He is capable of doing everything, not Gulbuddin [Hikmatyar]. Anyway, they became arrogant. What we proposed to them was that we should oust the [Soviet] units, we should go for elections, and invite an international delegation. Or if you want a coalition government, come to your country and start your activities in the form of your organizations. They said no, we want to assume power by the sword and guns and the help of Pakistani militia and regular forces of Pakistan, Saudi mercenaries and Wahhabis, and with the help of modern weapons supplied to us from abroad.

You are aware, as I said before, they began their first attack on Jalalabad. I should tell you frankly as to why we were steadfast in Jalalabad, while at the time of signing the Geneva Accords we had left for them a number of regions. Why did [words indistinct]? However, when the units were completely withdrawn, listen very well, there were no more organizations and parties, they had created a Council in Pakistan [words indistinct]. Within the Council, the Inter-Services Intelligence—that is, the military intellegence of Pakistan—created a government. It was this government which was to have been transferred to Jalalabad. A number of Western countries had previously gone out of Afghanistan at the time of the withdrawal of the Soviet forces. Those countries, it was the plan, would have officially recognized that government. Now a number of countries of the world are members of the United Nations. Afghanistan is also a member. They are members the Nonaligned Movement; Afghanistan is also a member of that organization. These had recognized Kabul—that is, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan—but a number would have recognized the government which would have been created in Jalalabad. From that day Afghanistan was divided. Now you tell me: Should we have resisted resolutely or not? Great losses were suffered on both sides. We anticipated this and had said beforehand that as a result of the continuation of war nothing except futile losses, the death of innocent people, and the destruction of our common home, Afghanistan—nothing else would have been achieved.

We can, with heads held high, tell you that the soil which our fathers and forefathers had left in trust to us—we did not allow this territory to be dismembered, and we defended the territorial integrity, independence, and freedom of the homeland. If, God forbid, your homeland was dismembered, would it be possible for you to be proud in your homeland, the Koh-e Daman? Would it be possible for any Afghan in Afghanistan in whatever part of the country to call himself an Afghan as were their fathers and forefathers? The history of Afghanistan will draw its judgment. However, I believe, as it was stated by an elderly man in this meeting, that 80 percent of the Afghan people have now realized and and are realizing the truth.

I should tell you that the state has consistently criticized its shortcomings and mistakes. However, the honors we have achieved—you should be just, you should give us the credit. This, of course, was with your courage, your bravery, and your support. I should tell you that the

defense of Jalalabad was carried out with the joint efforts of all nationalities and tribes and various provinces of the country. They sent their children to defend the eastern gate of the country. Without your support we would not have been able to do anything. But we have with us the trust and confidence of the people of Afghanistan. It is because of this that we displayed, along with them, the courage and dignity to defend the territorial integrity and independence of your homeland. However, when they did not succeed in breaking Afghanistan into pieces, they designed another plan to destroy Afghanistan. Now we know that the war is not only against Najib and his colleagues or his party. Look at the present situation in the Lowgar, Maydan, Parwan, Nejrah, Tagab, Baghlan, Takhar, Konduz, Badakhshan—everywhere there are clashes between Hezb-e Eslami and Jamiat-e Eslami, even at Qarah Bagh.

Can you find an Afghan to whom someone else gives a bomb and tells him take this, leave it under your home, where there are your children and your family, who would all be destroyed? Afghanistan is our common home. And we live as a family in this common home. Every day they are firing rockets at us, hitting one place, then another. They are destroying your homes. I have always addressed commanders inside the country and I am pleased, too, that two-thirds of these commanders inside the country are not fighting a war. They realized the essence of patriotism and being an Afghan. They are thinking of their honor, homeland, and dignity. I am grateful to them. However, a number of others.... [changes thought] It is a matter of regret that a few days ago the BBC cited Ahmad Shah Mas'ud saying they do not have the right to exert pressure on him in order to fight, because they have not supplied him with weapons. Who is exerting pressure on him? It is pressure from outside; it is exerted by Pakistani generals. It is the Americans who exert pressure. Could we call a person a patriot who asks for supplies from an alien who tells him to destroy his homeland, block the road, or other?

Utilizing this meeting with you, I hope that he is hearing what I say. Until recently I thought that among the commanders, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud was a wise person and I thought he himself was making decisions, that he himself was struggling and fighting. But it is now proved that he is instructed by Pakistani generals. It was he himself who asked over the BBC why they exert pressure on him, as he does not have ammunition to continue the war. You may ask me that: Najib, you are receiving ammunition, weapons, and rockets from the Soviet Union. But I have said many times: Let us at this very moment declare a cease-fire and return all the weapons and ammunition to whatever country that has supplied us. Let us take away the fire from the heads of the people of Afghanistan. Let us give the right to the people of Afghanistan to choose whomever they want as their leader or government.

Let me tell you something else: Those who ditch others will themselves end in the ditch. Pakistan rendered hostility against us; if it implements its devilish task of breaking Afghanistan into pieces and sowing discord, civil war, and fratricide, Pakistan itself has also not achieved any benefit. At this very moment the whole of Pakistan is a camp or weapons and it is a result of the sale of these weapons that in most of Pakistani provinces looting, plundering and murder are common. At this very moment, Pakistan has been transferred into an international conduit for narcotics trafficking. It cannot prevent it, because on the one side a number of the extremist leaders or our armed opposition, and on the other hand a number of Pakistani generals and a number of Pakistani bureaucrats, are together in doing this. No matter how much the Americans order them to prevent the trafficking of narcotics, they increase every day. Finally the United States had to say it was Gulbuddin who has narcotic plants; it is a very large plant from which he receives a lot of income.

The sorrow and pain—all to make people Wahhabis and engage them in the drug trade. Is it Islam? Now their masters say they are so and so. In Pakistan prices have gone up extremely; looting, theft, and plundering rage in the society; and in Rawalpindi they made a government in order to export it to Afghanistan and separate a part of the territory of Afghanistan, as a vassal government. They could not carry out this over the past year. Now this broken hand is hanging from their other neck. Now inside the Government of Pakistan another government has come about. It has its own prison, it has its own courts, it has its own government, and it has its own armed forces.

The war is continuing between whom now? The fighting is continuing between the groups of Jamiat-e Eslami led by (?Samad Sangi) and the Eslami group led by 'Abdullah Khan in the region of Mer Bacha Kot. And Qari Mohabol Raham is fighting against Karim, a commander of Hezb-e Eslami of Gulbuddin in Aka Khel of Qarah Bagh. Also during the last 2 months, clashes were going on between Ettehad-e Eslami led by Haji Baba and Jamiat-e Eslami led by Mohammad Anwar, that is Anwar Khan, and a number of people were arrested or perished. I want to ask why they separate one as a Jamiati, one as an infidel, one as an Ettehali, one as this one as that, one as Pashtu, one as Farsi, one as a Tajik, one from the north, and one from the south. This is a plan to break Afghanistan into pieces. [Passage indistinct]

There is no sowing and agriculture. The products of this sowing and agriculture, which used to go to factories as raw material—now, because there is no raw material, the factories do not function. They have destroyed and divided our country. There is a verse that says: [reading aloud in Arabic and then translating] A person cannot enjoy God's blessing if he does not love his country. Our country has been destroyed. Under what name? Under the name of Islam.

The problem is that behind our back, sacks and sacks of [word indistinct] are brought into our country by the Wahhabis and are being distributed in the various fronts. They even stand next to them [the opposition] and tell them to fire rockets at Kabul and we pay you such an

amount of money for so many rockets that you fire, and it does not matter if they land on poor people and families. What do the Wahhabis want from us? Do they introduce us to Islam? They say that, God forbid, in the declaration of Islamic faith which reads: There is no god but Almighty God and Mohammad is his messenger, that Mohammad has added his name because of his selfishness. This is our declaration of faith; they reject our declaration of faith. They accept only a part of the holy Koran, but not the other part of it. They do not believe in Islamic tradition [hadith]. They do not fast and do not perform special prayers of Ramadan. They do not believe in mosques, in shrines, in graves, and do not believe in saints.

It has been 1,300 years since you accepted Islam. It has been 1,400 years since the introduction of Islam. Did we accept Islam 1,300 years ago only to go back and accept this nonsense now? Please tell me, my compatriots. What for? For pride, for Afghan tradition, for the honor of this country? I must tell you, my dear uncles, from the bottom of my heart as your son that such a game has never been played with the people of Afghanistan in its entire history as the husbands come to fight in various fronts and there [Pakistan] they put the ladies together in the camps and they are being sold from this Arab to that Arab and from this Arab country to that Arab country.

They have destroyed our homeland. They have offended our Islam. They play with our pride and honor. What else do we have?

Now the question is what Pakistan will do if this government thinks it cannot go Afghanistan and stays there. Friends, they come to the point now that they have decided to dismantle this government. They instructed, therefore: Resign from the government—and, expressing displeasure, they claim that the legal term of the government is completed and elections must be held and a new government for Afghanistan should be set up. The reason was they want to avoid the government becoming a stranglehold. They created it to dismember our country, but with the glory of God they did not succeed in achieving this. What should they do now? Now they want to tear this government apart. This is why, as may have been heard, Gulbuddin recently said that both superpowers, the USSR and the United States, should stop supplying weapons to both sides and that he wanted elections. We have a proverb which says that what a wise man does the unwise also does, but after a thousand shames. However, I will clearly tell you that their trick is his proposal. It is said that the supply of arms shall cease by the USSR and the United States, but they do not say that arms supplies shall also be ceased by Saudi Arabia. He does not say that a number of Arab countries that supply him with weapons should be cut off. He does not speak about the weapons stored here and there and about their fate. He only wants to launch fresh bloodshed. Why does he not speak this way so that they are prepared to observe a cease-fire, so that the supply of arms from any country and any side shall be ended, and all existing weapons stores in Afghanistan shall be removed and be given to the supplying countries. He declares elections but adds that if anyone in the armed forces of Afghanistan will conduct a coup d'etat he will support them and a military council will be formed which will in turn hold elections—that is, more bloodshed! After the bloodshed it will be seen what is going to happen.

I believe the people of Afghanistan have reached a stage that they now know all those issues. The time of experiences has long gone. We forget about the headache caused to Pakistan by this government. But the question of the fate of the people of Afghanistan and the ensuring of peace and putting an end to war, fratricide, and civil war—it is not my job only, it is the duty of every Afghan. It is your conscientious and national duty. Neither shall I be obliged to you nor shall you to me—but if our home catches fire, all of us try to put this fire out. We shall try to rescue the people of Afghanistan from this bloodbath, to hold each other's hand and get the people of Afghanistan out of this burning oven. This is your duty and obligation.

This is the third time that I have talked to you, and once again I ask you as a whole to sit down with your children and expose before them all the conspiracies and intrigues that the enemies have unleashed against us. Tell them to come to sit together and not to divide ourselves in these colors and names. All of us are Afghans. We are of the same homeland. Are we Pashtuns, Hazara, or Uzbek, or Tajik; are we Pashaii, Turkeman, Or Nurestani, or Baluchi—all of us live in this country. I believe that, in addition to the fact that you have realized a series of truth in this general atmosphere, you see the realities in the Shamali [northern] region too. In my conversation in the month of Saratan, I told you that the blocking of roads, the plundering of goods from convoys, arson and killing among brothers, in addition to the fact that they have been resolutely forbidden through the tenets of the religion of Islam, are not in accord with the wishes of the people of Afghanistan, who have suffered during the past 10 years as a result of war. The first things that I asked you was to exert all your potentials and influence toward putting an end to the fratricidal war. My respected friends said here [words indistinct] that two things should be done. Why was the road closed? As a result of the plunder of convoys, the setting on fire of the convoys, and the plundering of goods and trucks and destruction of trucks and sale of their spare parts in Kabul city. Tell me, were all these things true or not? After all these events we decided, you did not want—or a number of you did not allow—the flow of traffic to continue there, that is, in practice the road was closed. We decided okay. So many were killed, so many were destroyed in this war. How many should be killed, how many should be orphaned? So we said let us leave these two districts and two sub-districts [words indistinct]. We began to build between Kabul and Bagram. Believe the money we have spent on this road: It is 1,500 million Afghani—at a time when the budget of Afghanistan and the economy of Afghanistan has suffered greatly as a result of the war. It was a great burden on the budget. Do you think we liked

to do this? Who benefits from the continuation of the situation? First you should be just, and if I have done this I completely accept my fault and tell you that. We take our hands off. [Murmur from the floor] Yes, I am aware and I thank you that you went to plead with them, but I emphasize the fact: Are they your children or not? Are they your blood and flesh or not? We have a saying in Pashtu that nail cannot be separated from the flesh; God forbid, I do not ask you to come and help me eliminate all of them. On the contrary, I tell you go and talk to them and tell them we are all brothers, don't heed the enemy conspiracy.

Why can we not think about all this? Let us see the situation which came into being as a result of the closure of the road. The main reason was the setting on fire [of vehicles], the blocking of roads, and the plundering of goods. As you said, some 250,000 people live in Koh-e Daman—but some 2 million people live in Kabul. They have the right, they have children, family, and youngsters—there is no doubt that a number of those who have everything [words indistinct] and, I believe completely, that the most poor people have suffered the most. It is due to this that we come to a logical conclusion: That in here too among the 2 million, if a few can eat with full stomach, the others cannot have their stomachs full. They are also your children, your families. And again, all these convoys are not coming for Kabul alone, they are taken in Lowgar, to Ghazni—be it by air or by road—it goes to Gardeyz, to Jalalabad, and Laghman, and to half of the country. Are they not all of them coming to us to ask for these [supplies]? In this small (?region) about which I am talking to you, who benefits from continuation of the situation?

I know that a number of your poor families are facing great hardship. This road was several times [word indistinct]. Flour, sugar, and [word indistinct] are very expensive. Poor families are unable to buy them. Those with fruit gardens have also suffered heavily. Their products are being supplied to bazaars at third and fourth hand. No health facilities are reaching the people in a proper manner. You should not think that we are unaware of the situation. The bus fare for a person traveling between Kabul and Parwan has gone up to 300 or 700 Afghani from 30 to 50 Afghani. The price of foodstuffs taken from Kabul city, such as flour: One Ser [7 kg] is 1,700 or 1,800 Afghanis; sugar is 800 Afghani per kg.; gasoline is 1,000 Afghanis per gallon. In contrast, the produce of the peasants and fruit, compared to prices in Kabul, are sold 50 percent cheaper, which has resulted in the worsening of their life. In addition, due to the fact that production by peasants during 1368 [ends 20 March 1990], in particular raisins, as a result of the blockage of the main highway have not been sold, was in whose benefit? With the closure of road along Koh-e Daman, the pressure exerted by the armed opposition groups in order to obtain foodstuffs was not directed against the government, but against the common people. The refuge of the defenseless people to Kabul city and other provinces during winter was increased. We see this situation very well.

At the same time, the people have suffered heavily as a result of the armed conflict of the opposition among themselves. All these things are imposed on the poor and defenseless people of Shamali by a limited number with force. I ask you once again, go and ask your armed commanders what have they provided the people of Shamali except misfortunes during the time that they have closed the roads. Tell them: What have they brought for you? To you elders, who are sitting here, I am completely aware of the proposals that you have put forward here today. Okay. As we said we shall consider other proposals. However, now I would like to announce to you that the new Kabul-Bagram road has been completed and even its asphalting is also being ended.

The needs of the government, the people, and the provinces can also be met through this road. Now, if that road is closed—whereas we can remove our needs through this road, in that case our attitude toward you will be discriminative [sentence as heard]. Therefore, we decide regardless of what they do. I unilaterally declare, as we have many times declared a cease-fire unilaterally, that that road will henceforth be opened to the people of Shamali [applause]. I am confident that as I made this decision for the sake of the people, widows, orphans, and poor, your sons, who are in the ranks of the opposition and are commanders, will also have a heart in their chests, at least an Afghan dignity, and, as you said that I should pave the way and untangle the knot. I hope that other ways to ensure peace and security shall also come about in this area. Now it is up to you.

I honored you; now tell your sons that although he is not one of us—as you told me last year, there are rumors about the one who is from the south and the one who is from the north—tell them that the man from the south fulfil this now, my son, by my side, what are you going to do? I do not consider myself for a single moment far from you. On the second problem of yours, I will clearly tell you that Mr Bahar will sit with you and shall find such a solution for this that neither side shall be prejudiced—that is, that does not take goods from the market of Kabul because it leads to price rises, which in turn will affect the life of the poor. We will assign the government; you present your proposals. I know you have transportation and your own vehicles. Salang is open; sign protocols with some ministries—I will instruct them. In Hayratan anything you need—tea, sugar, wheat—shall be handed over to you. It is your wish to transport it to your areas and people; but to your sons in the ranks of the opposition, transport less than others, and transport for the people of Kabul also. When there are foodstuffs in the market, then you have rendered service to our people, to the poor people, because Almighty God says: The best men are those who serve others. May God give you, me, and all of us the power to serve people. [applause]

Najibullah Grants Interview to BBC Correspondent

LD2612223189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1630 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Interview with President Najibullah by BBC correspondent Lise Ducet, who speaks in English with superimposed Pashto translation, on 24 December; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ducet] Ten years ago, Soviet troops entered Afghanistan. They played a strong role in the intensification of war and imposed innumerable sufferings on the people of Afghanistan. Do you think this [words indistinct] work?

[Najibullah] Armed interference and armed attack from abroad, particularly from Pakistani territory, (?were unleashed against Afghanistan) prior to the arrival of the Soviet troops. The military assistance by the Soviet Union, its officers' and troops' assistance, with the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan was a (?natural act). By this I mean that there exist mutual agreements and treaties between the two countries; and the (Soviet) assistance, in all spheres, was rendered within the framework of these agreements. However, I would like to answer the last part of your question as to how the decision was made about the intervention of the Soviet units. I affirm the recent assessment of the Soviet leadership in this regard. Regardless of whether this decision was good or bad, the officers and troops of the Soviet Union have given great help to Afghanistan and its people for which we express gratitude.

[Ducet] Do you think the changes that are taking place in Eastern Europe will negatively (?influence) the party members?

[Najibullah] We think that the great majority of our party members believe that the changes that are taking place in Eastern Europe are measures in the light of new political thinking, which give new content and new color to socialist societies of which democracy is inseparable.

[Ducet] I have been told by some members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] that the party is going to change its name, its policy, and its structure. Is this so that the party will be acceptable to the guerrillas and to the world?

[Najibullah] In light of the objective reality of Afghan society, and as you asked, on the basis of the changes that are taking place in many countries, it is natural and logical that the PDPA's (?organizational) structure and its political [word indistinct] should be considered for changes or they should be given new [word indistinct]. We do not do this so that our party will become acceptable to others, but it is one of our important, logical, and strategic dimensions and goals. I mean that the party as an organizational [word indistinct] consistently evolves and develops, and it should improve its structures and policies and bring about changes within it in proportion to situations and prevailing conditions. We believe that in the face of such a natural action, no objection within the party could arise.

[Ducet] What do you think about Zaher Shah returning? Would you agree with his coming back, even if it resulted in replacing you?

[Najibullah] I have spoken many times and clearly regarding this. Once again, I tell you that if Zaher Shah himself wants to, he can play his merited role in the restoration of peace and cessation of war. But no one can return him to Afghanistan. He can only come to Afghanistan as part of a political solution. As far as his future position is concerned, it depends on [word indistinct] when we sit at the negotiation table. I will clearly tell you that the political solution, who in the future will remain in which position and how, and my staying in power or the change of the present stance are all issues which depend only on Afghans and only they can talk about them. These issues can be resolved only when talks start between belligerent sides without foreign interference.

[Ducet] Everyone in Kabul, in the bazaar and the mosque, everywhere they are talking about Khalq and Parcham; they are talking about problems between the president and the defense minister. Tell me, have you resolved your differences with Defense Minister Shahnawaz Tanai?

[Najibullah] These are meaningless claims which emanate from the rumors which are provocative and seditious and which are raised from time to time alternately by the enemies of the PDPA and the Republic of Afghanistan. The time of Parcham and Khalq and the existence of factions in the PDPA ended a long time ago, when the party reunited in 1977, and raising this question now is not only incorrect but a point from history. No doubt in every country, including the PDPA [as heard], different ideas can come about and they do come about. But so far as the unity of the PDPA is concerned, I can strongly say that this party is stronger and more united than at any time.

[Ducet] I know your friend Abdol Wakil visited the FRG and met with Abdol Samad Hamed and Dr Yusuf.

[Najibullah] Our foreign minister went to West Germany to meet [word indistinct]. In an understanding with Willi Brandt, they started a program of goodwill and efforts for the political solution of the problem of Afghanistan which has persistently been welcomed and appreciated by us. We express our thanks to them in this respect; they have kept on this series.

[Ducet] You asked the Government of Turkey and other countries to help in the political solution. What do you expect from the German Government?

[Najibullah] It is their right to work for mediation between the belligerent sides for dialogue and negotiation and talks between the Afghans. We asked their mediation for friendly relations and good understanding

between us and Pakistan. In addition to this, we wanted mediation in respect of the Geneva agreements; that is, that signatories and guarantors shall fulfill their undertakings as regards those agreements. You know that on the eve of the Bush-Gorbachev talks I wrote to them to take a realistic attitude about the resolution of the problem of Afghanistan in their talks. I expressed gratitude to all those people and circles which work for the removal of the pains of the people of Afghanistan and for the solution of this problem.

[Ducet] My report will not work on rumors, but on facts.

[Najibullah] Yes, I will just remind you, lest you say good words but end them with distortion.

Islamabad Radio Reports Mujahidin Operations

BK2912022689 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] According to reports received from Afghanistan, the mujahidin have carried out successful operations against Kabul regime forces in Ahangari in (Sawebahar) township. Four Kabul troops were killed and 12 others injured in the mujahidin operations. One tank was also completely destroyed.

In another operation in the Daman area of Qandahar, the mujahidin killed three Kabul troops and injured many others.

India

Naxalites Release 2 Andhra Pradesh Officials

BK2912032689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, the abducted Congress-I MLA [member of legislative assembly] and the Mandal Praja Parishad [local administrative body] president were released late last night by the Naxalites [Maoist guerrillas]. Mr Vithal Reddy from Ramayampet and Mr Muniruddin Ghouri, Chingunta Mandal Praja Parishad president, who were kidnapped on Tuesday evening, were released around midnight last night near Ramayampet. The Naxalites sent a letter through them to be handed over to the chief minister. In that letter, they demanded the government to stop encounters [with Naxalites] and release those who were all arrested immediately.

The chief minister, Dr M. Chenna, Reddy expressed his happiness over the release of Mr Vithal Reddy and Muniruddin Ghouri. He congratulated the Naxalites for their response and change in their attitude. He hoped that this action from Naxalites will pave the way for greater understanding and evolving of an agreement on all issues and create peaceful atmosphere in the state.

Meanwhile, the whereabouts of the Mandal Praja Parishad president, Mr (Shankaraiya) of Mahadevpur in Karimnagar District, are still not known. The chief minister appealed to the kidnappers to release him also.

Punjab Member of Parliament Reported Missing

BK2812125489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] In Punjab, a massive search has been launched to trace the Akali Dal-Mann member of parliament, Mr Jagdev Singh Khudiyan, who has been reported missing from his residence in village Khudiyan in Faridkot District since this morning.

The state police chief, Mr K.P.S. Gill, told AIR [All India Radio] Chandigarh correspondent that according to a report lodged with the police by his family members, Mr Khudiyan went somewhere in the morning and has not since returned. Mr Gill said some of the personal belongings of Mr Khudiyan have since been found near a canal bank in the area.

Iran

Jamarani Discusses Possible Hajj Boycott

LD2612113689 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Imam Jamarani, representative of the Vali-ye Faqih and supervisor of the Hajj, Endowments, and Charity Affairs Organization, in an interview given to reporters about the possibility of Iranian pilgrims attending next year's Hajj rituals, referred to the bloody Hajj of 1987, the martyrdom of 16 Kuwaiti Muslims by the Al-Saud regime, and the arrest of Muslim Egyptians. He emphasized that world Muslims should stand against the treacherous moves of the Al-Saud, saying that if the Al-Saud regime continues its ugly and un-Islamic behavior, the presence of Iranian pilgrims in the coming Hajj rituals will be unlikely. [passage omitted]

Yazdi on 'Irresponsible Remarks' on Leadership

LD2912094689 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] In the wake of remarks by the leader of the Islamic Revolution alerting people to irresponsible remarks made against the officials of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Yazdi, head of the Judicial Branch, issued a statement in which he welcomed remarks made by the esteemed leadership, while refuting irresponsible remarks and personal opinions about the country's officials. He further stressed the safeguarding of unity and ever-greater solidarity.

According to our correspondent's report, the statement points out that God has ranked obedience to the vice-regent in an equal position as obedience to God and the prophet. The statement further stresses obedience to guidelines provided by the esteemed leader within the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who—according to Islamic tenets and the principle of vice-regency by juriconsult—is the main source of decision-making and guidance in all fields pertaining to powers which constitute the ruling system.

The head of the judiciary in his statement refuted the irresponsible remarks made against the officials of the system within the current sensitive situation in the country. He added: I hope that through safeguarding of the revolution and through respect for the leader, we may be more careful and vigilant in the face of the country's conditions and circumstances and thereby lend support to the acting officials.

Qom Clerics Support Khamene'i Remarks

LD2812205189 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] In the wake of remarks by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, alerting the people to irresponsible moves against the officials of the Islamic Republic regime, the Association of Instructors of the Qom Seminary [Jamae' ye Modarresin Hozeh Elmiyeh Qom] issued a statement. While supporting the remarks of the exalted leader, the association says that irresponsible confrontations against the officials of the regime, under the present sensitive conditions, are tantamount to siding with the enemies of Islam and the revolution.

According to an IRNA report, the statement, while praising the intelligent and wise leadership of his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, says in part: The remarks by his eminence, bringing attention to the moves of a number of uninformed individuals—who utilize public platforms and the mass media—serve as a stern warning which invites all the Muslim and God-seeking nation to be alert and on guard.

The Islamic Publicity Organization declares in a statement its preparedness to move toward the direction of the objectives of the leader of the Islamic revolution, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i.

The Association of Combatant Clerics [Jamae' Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez], in a statement, while supporting the statement of the exalted leader, declares: The remarks and valuable pieces of advice by the leader of the Islamic revolution, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i—may his exalted shadow continue—have had a deep impact, like the wise guidance of the great imam—may his dust be admitted to God's paradise—on the hearts of the followers of the school of Imamate and Velayat, as well as the Hezbollah ummah. They breed a new soul in the bodies of each individual member of the nation.

The same statement describes any effort to weaken the regime and to cast doubt on the performance of the true servants of the Islamic Republic, especially under the present sensitive conditions, as a capital sin which cannot be pardoned.

President on East Europe's Spiritual Needs

LD2812201189 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Explaining the world developments and the disintegration of the communist camp, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed the need for the presence of the clerics—more than ever before—as well as the need for propagating Islam for the people who are thirsting for freedom and spirituality, in an address to Friday prayer leaders and clerics of Tehran province.

The president remarked: Now that Marxism has disintegrated, the standard of campaign against imperialism and against the sovereignty and domination of capital is in the hands of Muslim revolutionaries. That is a basic and important issue on which more effort should be made.

Referring to the positions adopted by his holiness the imam—may his soul be sanctified—with regard to development of the world of communism, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Our position with regard to these developments has been clear from the very beginning. Because no other schools can replace communism, today the only axis which can attract justice-seekers of the world is the package of Islam.

Referring to the point that governments ruling over a number of Islamic countries are against the Islamic movement, he said: We carry a very important mission on our shoulders in bringing the message of Islam to the peoples of the world; however, we ourselves must unfortunately carry out that mission on our own, alone. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Fortunately, we have numerous addressees in the world. So, we can bring the message of Islam, to some extent, to the ears of the peoples of the world. However, to be able to serve as the announcer of the message of Islam, we must definitely be powerful, and we must go for constructiveness [sazandegi] while maintaining our revolutionary and solidarity spirit.

Referring to the importance of the country's construction and independence, the president added: The point of confrontation [taqahol] with the West is about the issues of constructiveness. Debates on that issue must not be such that they may impair our revolutionary thoughts, enabling the Westerners with their ample wickedness to exploit them. With vast potential resources available in the country we must, while engaged in constructiveness, maintain our epochal revolutionary spirit, as well as the Islamic values and the gaiety of the people.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Today, imperialism's wicked propaganda means to divide our society into two sections—so-called radical and moderate—and to place them against each other. We must be alert not to fall into that trap.

The president stressed: The most important revolutionary measure today is that of the country's construction and cutting off the strings of economic dependency.

Fortunately, the powerful majority of the Majlis shares the same view and the same path with the government.

Also referring to the need for achievement of social justice, Hashemi-Rafsanjani underlined: If we are truly men of action, we can achieve social justice in a better way, while engaging in character building and reconstruction—doing so through providing the essential needs of the people's lives. To encourage action is different from encouraging thievery. The experience of the past 10 years demonstrates that monopolists and individuals against justice can find a better field for action to impair social justice under conditions of shortages and prevailing poverty.

Rafsanjani Discusses Islam's Anti-Imperialist Role

LD2812150589 Tehran IRNA in English 1430 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—With the collapse of Marxism, said President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Thursday, "the flagbearers of the struggle against imperialism, heremony and capitalism are the Muslim revolutionaries," which marks a "fundamental and vital" development.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani speaking to a group of ulema from Tehran province, said "Islam is now the only pivot capable of rallying together all justice-lovers around the world," and can fill the resulting vacuum.

"Fortunately, we can convey, to some extent, the message of Islam to people across the world and in order to convey the message, we should certainly be strong," he stressed.

The president cautioned Iranian officials not to be entrapped by news imperialism, which is attempting to divide them into the so-called radical and moderate groups through malicious propaganda.

Charter, Purchase of Soviet Aircraft Discussed

LD2812162689 Tehran IRNA in English 1457 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organisation Ali Mohammad Nourian, today discussed with Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Gudev, the charter and purchase of airplanes from the Soviet Union.

The two also reviewed technology transfer to Iran and exchange of research and date relevant to atmosphere and meteorological issues.

The meeting, also attended by a representative of the Soviet Airline (Aeroflot), studied the Aeroflot request to increase its Moscow-Tehran flight to twice per week, as well as the possibility of Iran air flights to Moscow and Baku, the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan.

According to the agreements reached by the two sides in the meeting, a Soviet delegation will arrive here soon to follow up the talks.

Deputy Foreign Minister Discusses World Polarity

LD2812203489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] The implications of Eastern Europe and developments in the United States, as well as America's relations with other countries, were debated in this week's political roundtable, broadcast on the second channel of the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Central News Unit reports that in the roundtable, first Mr Larijani pointed out that due to recent developments they will be witnessing a more united Europe which will be inclined more toward the USSR. He said: Naturally, such developments will be disadvantagous to the United States. He predicted that to remedy such a disadvantage, the United States will carry out activities in four regions of the world, including the Pacific Ocean and the Japan axis, the Middle East and the Lebanese axis, and compromise with Syria, the Persian Gulf, the Iranian Ocean and the American continent. [sentence as heard]

Later in the program, Dr Elahi pointed to the fact that the world is currently moving toward multipolarity, and the third pole will be the Islamic revolution. He said: While Marxism and capitalism are both fading in the face of trying to resolve humanity's problems, the implications of the Islamic revolution in Iran has increased people's propensity toward religion in the United States, Europe, and the USSR. On the other hand, at present 80 million Muslims live in the USSR, and in the near future the world's Muslim population will increase.

Continuing the discussion, Mr Larijani referred to the affects of changes in Eastern Europe in Iran. He said: The United States is trying to incite the Arab countries against us and to maintain the Iraqi regime as the region's gendarme, even though it is probable that Saddam may be toppled in the future. He said: My prediction is that our relations wilth Pakistan and Turkey will improve, and in the course of the next 10 years, there will be better practical ground for Iran in the USSR and throughout Europe. He then pointed to the Salman Rushdi affair, which shows the living and alert nature of the Islamic community the world over. He said: We are one of the special countries in the world which has a new field for action, which is an ideological confrontation against materialism.

Habibi, Turkish Official Discuss Relations

LD2812195589 Tehran IRNA in English 1659 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Turkish Deputy Foreign Hosein Chalim met First Vice President Hasan Habibi here Thursday, and felt assured that Tehran-Ankara relations would improve.

Chalim expressed hope that his "fruitful" talks with other Iranian officials, could positively affect mutual relations.

Reflecting on Turkey's stand on U.N. Resolution 598, he said that his government supports the implementation of the resolution.

Habibi replied that both countries should endeavour to preserve their common historical and religious ties.

On Resolution 598, Habibi cautioned that Iraq's efforts to hamper its implementation would have adverse effects on regional security.

He said "withdrawal of Iraqi troops to internationally-recognized borders is a must. Baghdad's prerequisites are considered meaningless by international circles because the the Iran-Iraq water border has been specified by the 1975 accord."

Chalim arrived here Tuesday at the invitation of his Iranian counterpart Alaeddin Borujerdi.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani 'Conducted' Israeli Oil Deal

TA2812173989 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] In the recent oil deal between the Islamic Republic and Israel, which was revealed by the NBC television network, the overthrown Romanian regime was also involved. Those who conducted the deal were Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the son of former Romanian President Ceausescu who is now imprisoned by Romania's freedom-seeking forces, and an Israeli businessman. Israeli food is to be exported to the Islamic Republic in return for oil from Iran.

In his recent official visit to the Islamic Republic at Khamene'i's invitation—72 hours after which he was executed by Romania's freedom-seeking forces—Ceausescu held talks on the delivery of MiG aircraft by Romania to the Islamic Republic and made certain promises.

Indirect Saudi Arabian Talks Said 'Failed'

TA2712184389 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Dec 89

[Text] With the repercussions of the attacks by the Islamic Republic's leader against Saudi Arabia, it is being said that the talks that the regime's Foreign Ministry was conducting through the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates aimed at renewing relations with Saudi Arabia have failed.

This is the second time since Khomeyni's death that the efforts of some of the regime's authorities to renew relations with Saudi Arabia have been foiled by the regime's radicals. On the basis of Khomeyni's political will, the radical faction rejects any friendly relationship with Saudi Arabia's present government. Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, who in his severe attacks has called the leaders of Saudi Arabia the foes of God and the supporters of the enemies of Islam, has every time led the diplomatic efforts of Hashemi-Rafsanjani's government into deadlock.

Pakistan

President Lauds Afghan People's Freedom Struggle

BK2812142489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has reaffirmed Pakistan's continued support to Afghan brothers in their struggle for freedom. In a message on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of foreign military intervention in Afghanistan, the president said the Pakistani people consider it a matter of pride to stand by the side of their Afghan brethren at this time of suffering and tribulation. He said the Afghan people have now come closer to victory, which will result, God willing, in the restoration of their fundamental rights.

The president added that 10 years ago, a superpower's forces actively intervened in Afghanistan and established a puppet regime that was rejected by the Afghan people. The valiant people of Afghanistan waged a heroic struggle to defend their freedom, religion, and national identity, and their victory in this struggle has been proved by the fact that the foreign occupation forces were forced to pull out of Afghanistan.

Understanding Between Khan, Bhutto Welcomed

BK2612110389 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 12 Dec 89 p 4

[Editorial: "A Welcome 'Settlement'"]

[Text] The withdrawal of the federal government's appeal from the Supreme Court on the question of whether the President or the Prime Minister has the power to make appointments to the superior courts, is a welcome development. The mounting tension between occupants of the country's two top offices had added a serious dimension to the equation which has, unfortunately, remained far from being settled since the advent of democracy a year ago. A section of opinion held that a thorough judicial review of the correct constitutional position was necessary to settle the recurring tensions on this score once and for all. According to this argument, the instant case [as published] would thus not only have given an opinion on the controversy regarding the appointment of judges, but was bound also to take a more comprehensive view of the basic power equation.

Such an appreciation of the need to let the present constitutional structure go through an exhaustive judicial review is not without merit. This is especially true of the distribution of powers and functions between the President and the Prime Minister. The changes made by General Ziaul Haq (or, on his behalf, by the quasi-military set-up of Mr Junejo) to the carefully worked out scheme of the original 1973 Constitution were primarily motivated by the objective of perpetuating his own rule. These would continue to pose practical problems in the day-to-day functioning of the state for the simple reason of an apparent lack of coherence and consistency

between them as also vis-a-vis the rest of the constitutional structure. Without, therefore, going into the more basic question of the Eighth Amendment's compatibility or otherwise with our constitutional scheme, some of the seeming anomalies and loose-ends incorporated by virture of the former, need to be at least put into perspective. And the superior courts of Pakistan are the forums entrusted specifically by the Constitution to do just such a job through their interpretative jurisdiction.

So far so good. The federal government's appeal against the Lahore High Court's decision on the President's discretionary powers to appoint judges to the superior courts would no doubt have played a positive role if the Supreme Court had proceeded to examine the case in detail and given its definitive advice. But to overlook the existing political milieu and the effect the row over the judges' appointment was having on it, would be unrealistic. Under the prevailing circumstances, therefore, the reported understanding reached between the President and the Prime Minister in this case which led to the appeal's withdrawal, is a most healthy and promising sign of an improvement in the national political climate. As published reports indicate, chances are that this "compromise" may also be reflected in certain other high-tension areas of the democratic structure yet to be fully consolidated.

Air Force Chief Meets Zimbabwean Air Marshal

BK2612131889 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1300 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] The deputy chief of the Zimbabwe Air Force, Air Vice Marshal (Henry Rizheno), had a meeting with the chief of air staff, Air Chief Marshal Hakimullah, in Islamabad today. The deputy chief of the Zimbabwe Air Force expressed his gratitude at cooperation and support extended by the PAF [Pakistan Air Force], which immensely contributed toward strengthening of Zimbabwe's defense potentials.

Sri Lanka

Cooperation With Soviet Youth League Planned

BK2412132489 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1245 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] The United National Party [UNP] Youth League and the Soviet communist youth league have established close links. APN news agency reports that President Premadasa is to extend his full support in this regard. A delegation of the Soviet communist youth league is now in Sri Lanka at the invitation of the UNP Youth League. Official discussions between the two youth leagues have already commenced and talks are now under way to establish links of economic cooperation and exchange information on cultural affairs. The leader of the Soviet youth delegation, Dimitriy Afonin, told the NOVOSTI news agency that there were several possibilities to establish close links in various fields between the two leagues. They agreed to exchange delegations comprising youth parliamentarians of the two countries at an official level. Discussions are now underway to explore the possibility of starting a training program for Sri Lankan youths in the Soviet Union. The youth communist league hopes to provide special allowances and other facilities to UNP youth league students who are studying in the Soviet Union.

JVP Military Wing Leader Killed by Gunfire

BK2912115189 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] The military wing leader of the JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna], Saman Piyasiri Fernando, was killed in an exchange of fire with the police in a suburb of Colombo. The minister of foreign affairs and state minister for defense, Ranjan Wijeratne, told newsmen at the weekly cabinet news briefing yesterday that a full report on this incident has been submitted to the inspector general of police [IGP] by the DIG [Deputy Inspector General] Colombo.

According to this report, Saman Piyasiri Fernando was arrested by a team of police officers at a location in the suburbs of Colombo. Consequent on his arrest and interrogation, the suspect provided the police with various vital items of information. On the basis of the information provided by the suspect, he led the police team to a location which he said was being used as a former headquarters in the suburbs of Colombo. As the team of investigators came up to the location, which was found to be in a secluded area, he was fired upon by persons from within the premises. The fire was returned by the police.

The report adds that suspect Fernando, who was leading the team, was hit and succumbed to his injuries a short while later. During the exchange of fire, several explosions from within the house were heard. Subsequently, after the firing ceased, the police team entered the premises. They found six male persons dead with injuries which appeared to have been caused by explosions. One of the dead has been identified as (Ragam Soman), military wing activist [of the JVP], who was believed to have led the Welikada jail break in December and who took part in the attack of the Katunayake air base twice. This was stated by IGP Ernest Perera in the cabinet news briefing.

The foreign minister also disclosed more details of the activities of JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera. He said it has now been established that the name Kirti Wijebahu was named [words indistinct] by any member of the JVP Politburo except Wijeweera. He added that Wijeweera was supposed to be Kirti Wijebahu ultimately. The foreign minister said that it is understood that the gold recovered at the premises of the late Rohana Wijeweera was collected with the intention of making a crown for himself.

31 People Killed in Tamil Groups Fighting

BK2812130089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Dec 89

[Text] In Sri Lanka, 31 people were killed today in internecine fighting between Tamil groups in the north of the island. Agency reports from Colombo say fierce fighting is still going on in the outskirts of Vavuniya between the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and the rival Tamil National Army [TNA] controlled by the EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front]. Most of the casualties are said to be the TNA men.

Casualty Toll Updated

BK2912093489 Hong Kong AFP in English 0927 GMT 29 Dec 89

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 29 (AFP)—Sixty-eight people have been killed in fierce gunbattles between a Tamil guerrilla group and a provincial police force in Sri Lanka's north, a Tamil party governing the region said here Friday.

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) said that eight members of its Citizens' Volunteer Force (CVF) and 60 members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had died in two days of fighting in Vavuniya District.

Initial reports Thursday had put the death toll at 42.

An EPRLF spokesman said 40 Tiger rebels and four members of the CVF (police force) died in the first clash, which broke out overnight Wednesday and continued for more than eight hours into Thursday.

The spokesman said three more LTTE fighters were killed when they returned to the scene of the fighting near the Vavuniya-Mannar highway to retrieve the bodies of their comrades. He said 16 LTTE victims had been identified.

In the second encounter, 17 Tiger guerrillas and four CVF personnel were killed Thursday in Vavuniya's Cheddikulam area when the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Army jointly attacked a CVF patrol, the spokesman said. He said that 10 AK-47 automatic rifles, five G-3 rifles, five M-16 guns, four grenades and ammunition were seized after the gunbattles, reportedly the most serious in the area in recent times.

There was no independent confirmation of the claim, which came a day after Indian Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh told Parliament that "fully armed Tamil groups are facing each other" in Sri Lanka.

Indian troops deployed in Sri Lanka since July 1987 have vacated five of eight districts in the island's Tamil-majority Northeastern Province, which is administered by the EPRLF. The five districts include Vavuniya.

New Delhi said Thursday that all troops would return home by March 31.

Fierce fighting between the LTTE and rival groups, such as the EPRLF, has reportedly left hundreds of people dead since late October, when large numbers of Indian troops began tc leave the Tamil-majority northeast.